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# AZUMI

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## IEYASU'S FINAL MOMENTS

# AZUMI

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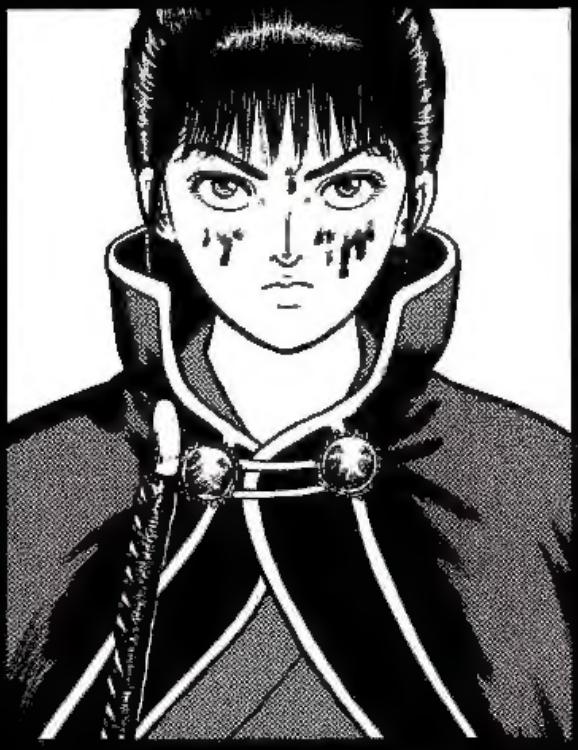
## IEYASU'S FINAL MOMENTS

KOYAMA YŪ



# AZUMI

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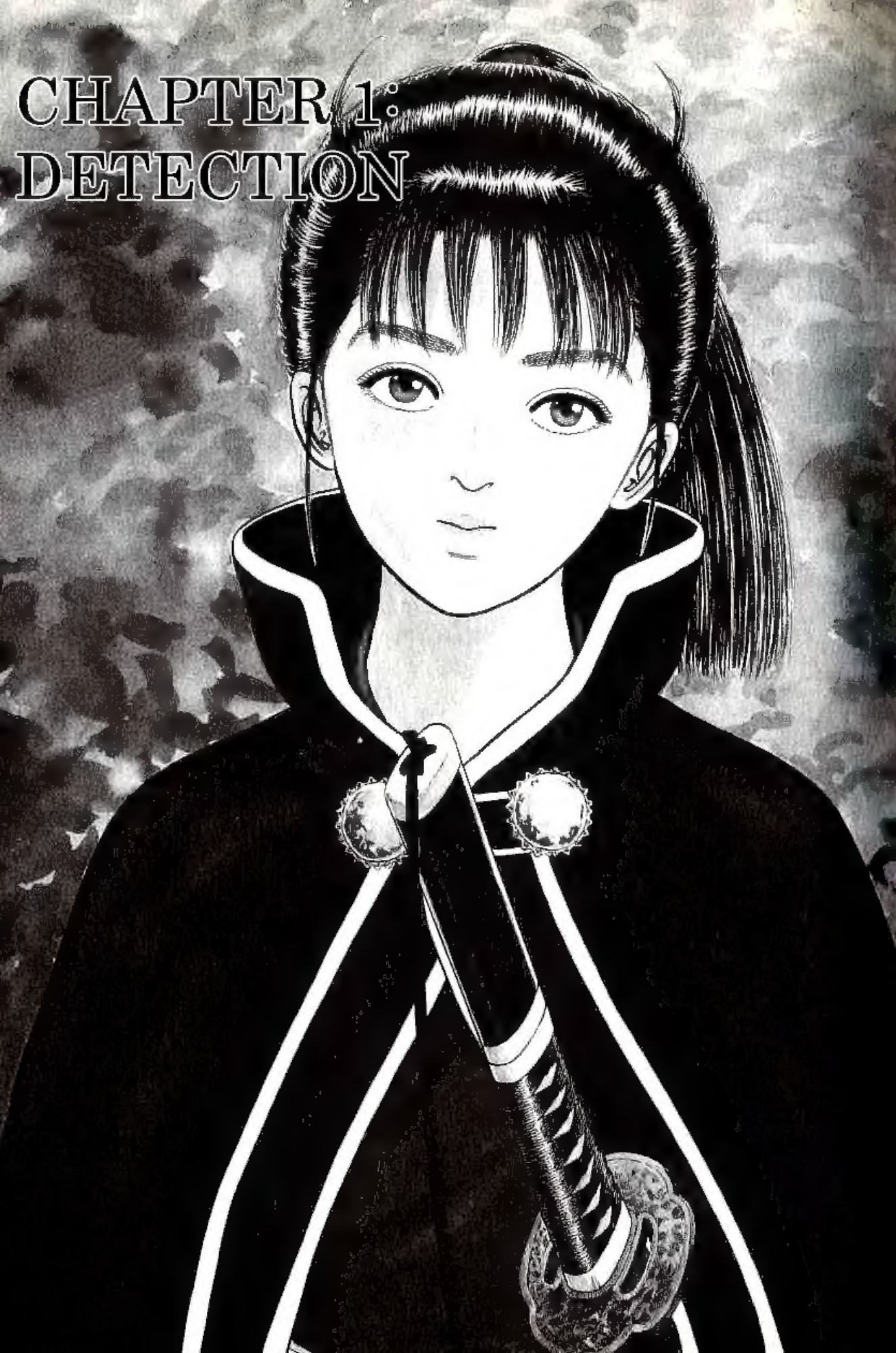
# CHAPTER 1: DETECTION



YOU CAN SEE THE MOON...
YES!
IT'S ALWAYS EMPTY.
HOW IS IT? NICE SPA, RIGHT!?

COME CLOSER.
UHM !?
AZU-MI.
SINCE YOU'VE GOT NOTHING COVERING YOU, I ALSO WANT YOU TO TELL ME YOUR TRUE INTENTIONS!! YOU TOLD ME THAT YOU WANT TO KNOW THE PERSON WHO WAS IN COMMAND OF THE GROUP OF ASSASSINS THAT KILLED YOUR GRAMPA, BUT...
I'M HERE.
TO ATTEMPT TO KILL IEYASU, RIGHT!?
YOUR TRUE INTENTIONS ARE TO KILL WHO GAVE THE ORDER...

SO? TELL ME THE TRUTH!!
MORE THAN WHO CARRIED IT OUT AFTER ALL...
BECAUSE YOU SHOULD HATE WHO GAVE THE ORDER

UHM !?
I'M NOT SOMEBODY WHO CAN SPEAK OF REVENGE.
AS REVENGE FOR THE KILLING OF YOUR GRAMPA!
YOU'LL TRY TO KILL IEYASU

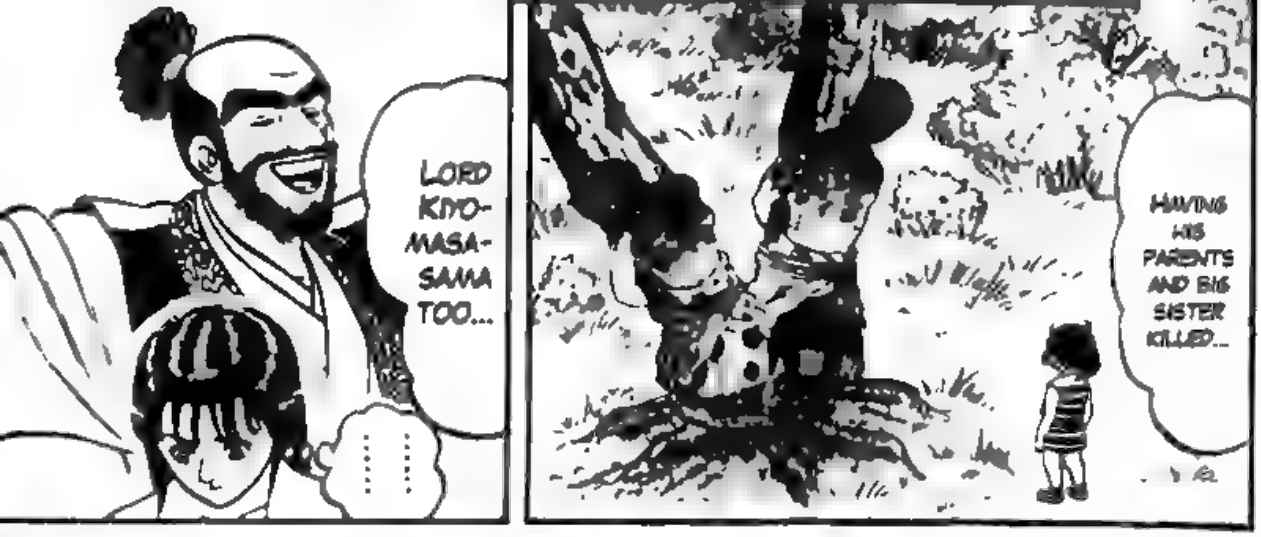
.....
WHO SHOULD SUFFER A GREAT DEAL OF THAT...
IF I STARTED SPEAKING OF REVENGE... I'M SOME-ONE

IT'S JUST THAT ...
IT STARTED WITH AN ORDER FROM IEYASU...
WE WERE GIVEN TRAINING...
GRAMPA... DEDICATED ALL OF HIS REMAINING LIFE TO IT...
WE CARRIED OUT A MISSION CALLED "KILLING IEYASU'S ENEMIES"...
MY COMRADES DIED AFTER LIVING LIVES THAT WERE TOO SHORT...

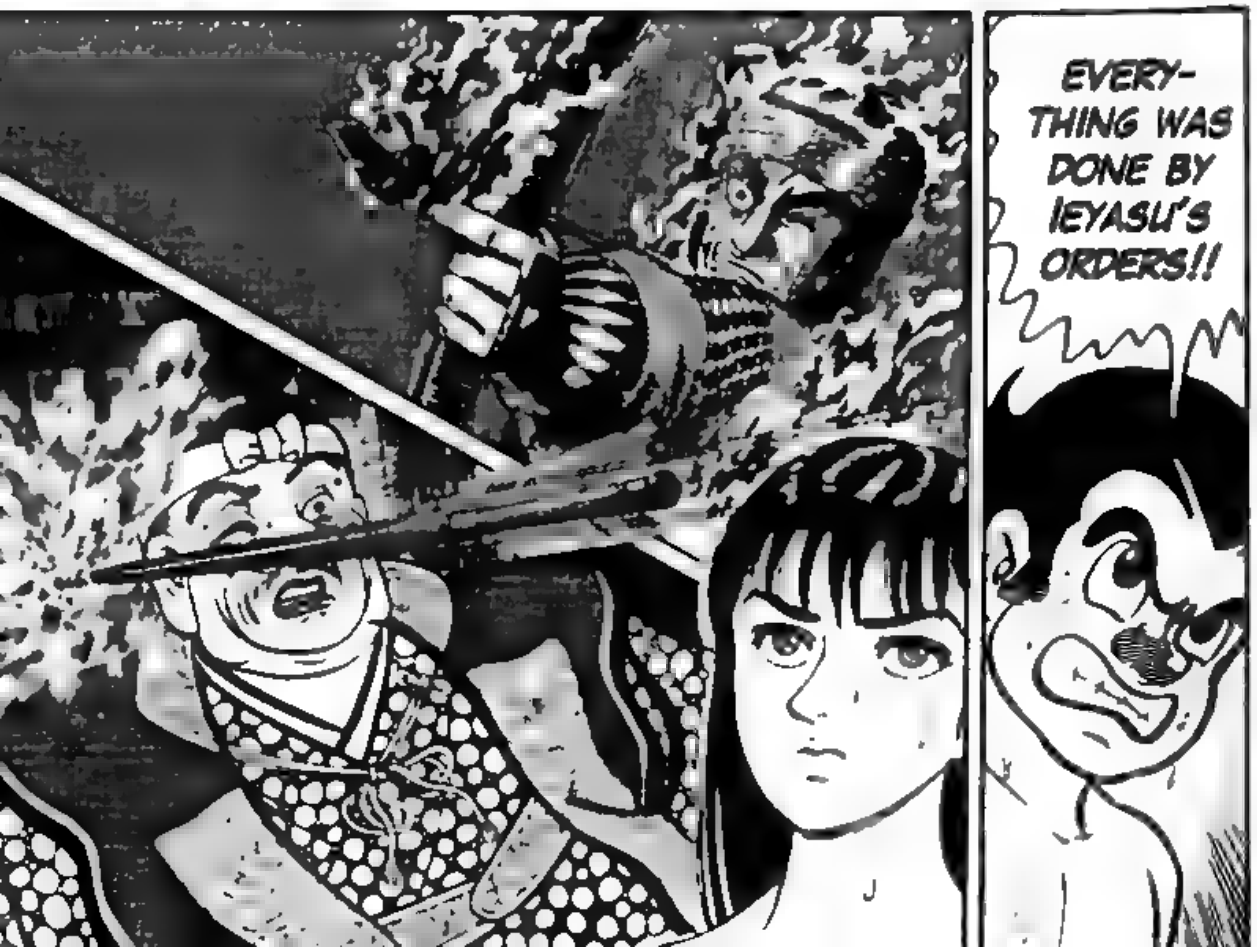
IE-YASU ...
DECIDED TO IGNORE ALL OF THAT...
AND NOW THAT ...
THE EN-EMIES HAVE BEEN TAKEN CARE OF...
AND EVEN KILLED GRAMPA...
AIMED AT OUR LIVES,
.....
WERE GRAMPA'S ACHIEVEMENTS... THE PROOF OF... EVERYONE'S LIVES... FOR?
THEN... WHAT ON EARTH...
I'M NOT A PERSON WHO CAN SPEAK OF VENGEANCE, BUT...

EVERY-
ONE'S
REGRET
.....
NO
MATTER
WHAT...
I CAN'T
LEAVE
SUNPU
LIKE THIS,
GIVING UP
EVERY-
THING
WOULD
BE TOO
GREAT...

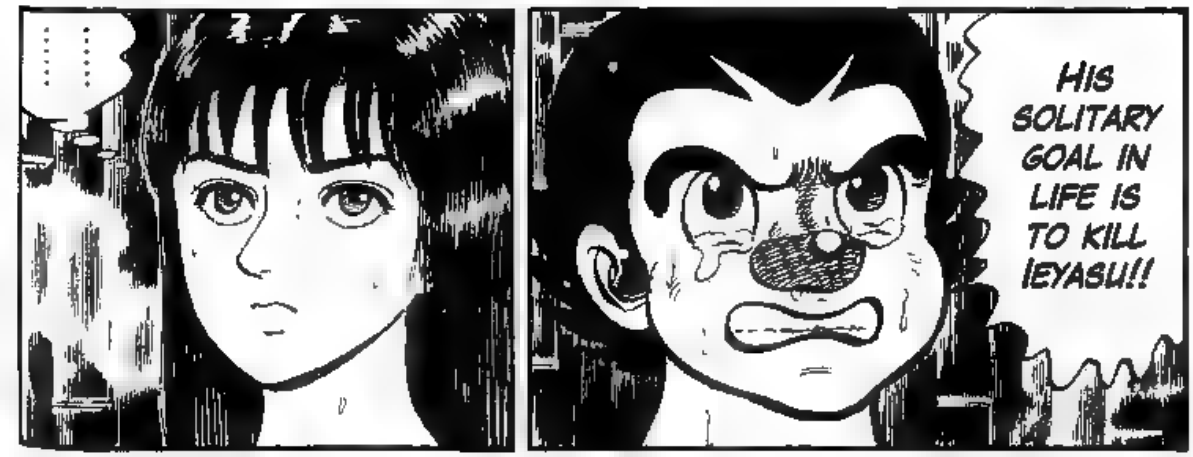
NO, SUCH A THING IS...
MEETING IEYASU AND JUST TELLING FRANKLY MY THOUGHTS...
NOW I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SHOULD DO TOO.
I WANT TO MAKE KANBEE-SAMA THE ONE WHO KILLS IEYASU!!
BUT, I UNDER-STAND!
.....
YOU KNOW, WHEN HE WAS YOUNG, HIS PARENTS AND BIG SISTER WERE BRUTALLY...
YES... I'VE HEARD THAT STORY FROM KANBEE-DONO.
I SEE...
THEN, YOU CAN UNDER-STAND, RIGHT !?


LORD KIYO-MASA-SAMA TOO...
.....
HAVING HIS PARENTS AND BIG SISTER KILLED...

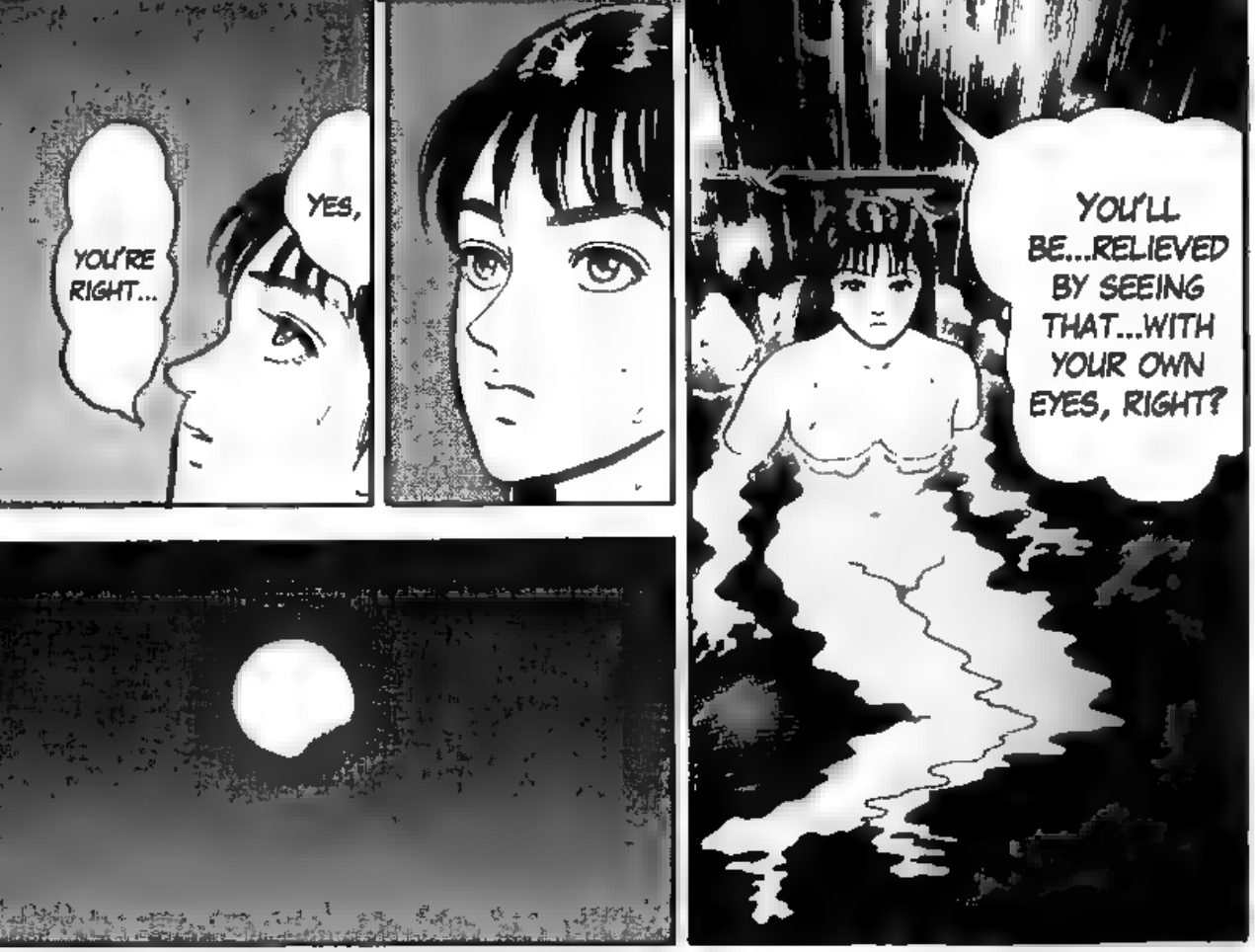
AND THE LEADERS WHO HE RESPECTED, HIDEYORI-SAMA AND YODO-DONO SLAIN...


EVERY-THING WAS DONE BY IEYASU'S ORDERS!!

I WANT FOR HIM TO KILL IEYASU!! I WANT IEYASU TO SAVOR KANBEE-SAMA'S TENACITY...
NOW...
THAT CAN'T BE PUT INTO WORDS...
KAN-BEE-SAMA
HAS GOT ONLY THAT!!


.....
HIS SOLITARY GOAL IN LIFE IS TO KILL IEYASU!!

I UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS TOO, BUT WHO'LL KILL IEYASU WILL BE KANBEE-SAMA!!
I WANT HIM TO ACHIEVE THAT!!
.....


YOU'RE RIGHT...
YES,
YOU'LL BE...RELIEVED BY SEEING THAT...WITH YOUR OWN EYES, RIGHT?

WAH HA HA HA HA HA
OH!!
WEL-COME HOME!
AH!! OH, MY...

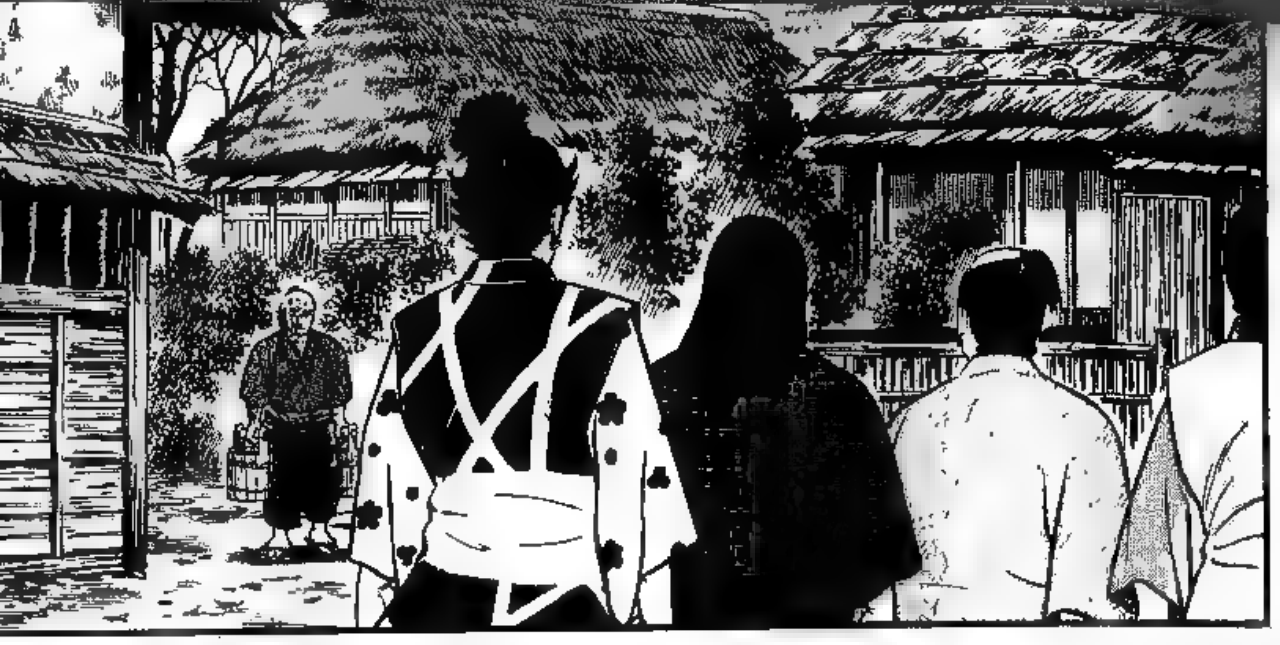
HEY HEY, STOP, STOP.
AH... AHH- HH...

I'M GRATEFUL FOR THOSE WORDS THAT I DON'T DESERVE.

WHEN I COME HERE, I'M ONE OF TADAAKI DISCIPLES TOO.

2

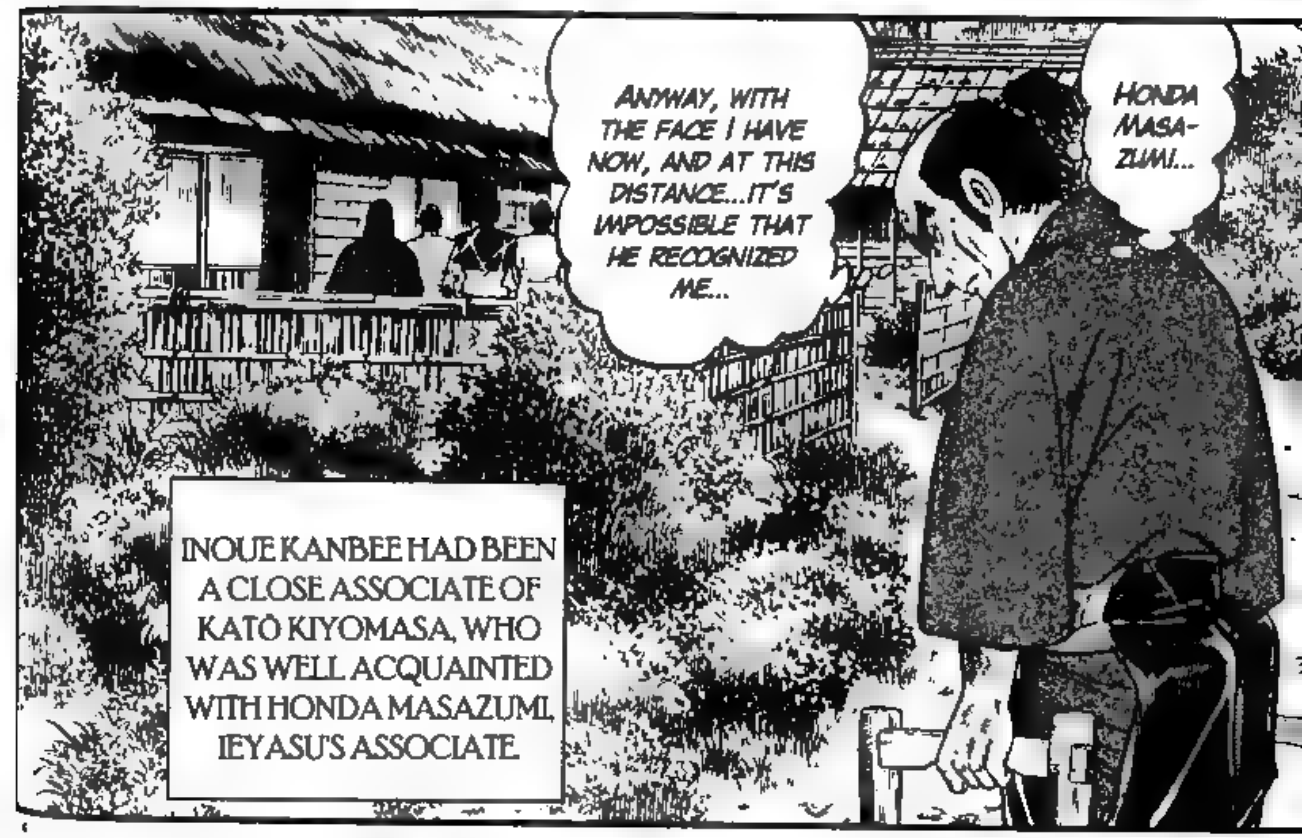
HONDA MASAZUMI. ONE OF IEYASU'S CLOSEST ASSOCIATES.



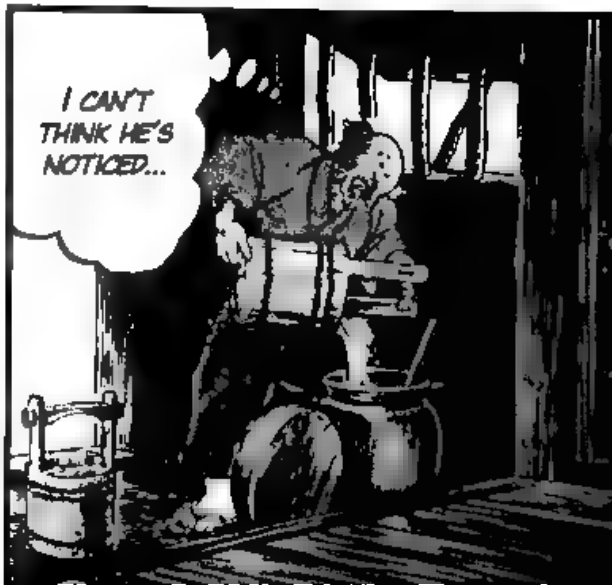
.....

IS SOMETHING WRONG!?

NO...


ANYWAY, WITH THE FACE I HAVE NOW, AND AT THIS DISTANCE...IT'S IMPOSSIBLE THAT HE RECOGNIZED ME...
HONDA MASA-ZUMI...
INOUE KANBEE HAD BEEN A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF KATŌ KIYOMASA, WHO WAS WELL ACQUAINTED WITH HONDA MASAZUMI, IEYASU'S ASSOCIATE.

THE FACT THAT HE STOPPED AFTER LOOKING THIS WAY WAS PROBABLY BECAUSE HE WAS SURPRISED TO SEE A MAN WITH BURN SCARS...


I CAN'T THINK HE'S NOTICED...

I WAS CARELESS. IT'S TRUE THAT TADAAKI-DONO TEACHES THE SWORD EVEN TO IEYASU'S TOSHIYORISHŪ...
I DIDN'T THINK THAT HONDA MASAZUMI COULD COME TO TADAAKI-DONO'S MANSION...
HOW-EVER... WHAT A SURPRISE ...

.....

HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN, INOUE KANBEE-DONO...

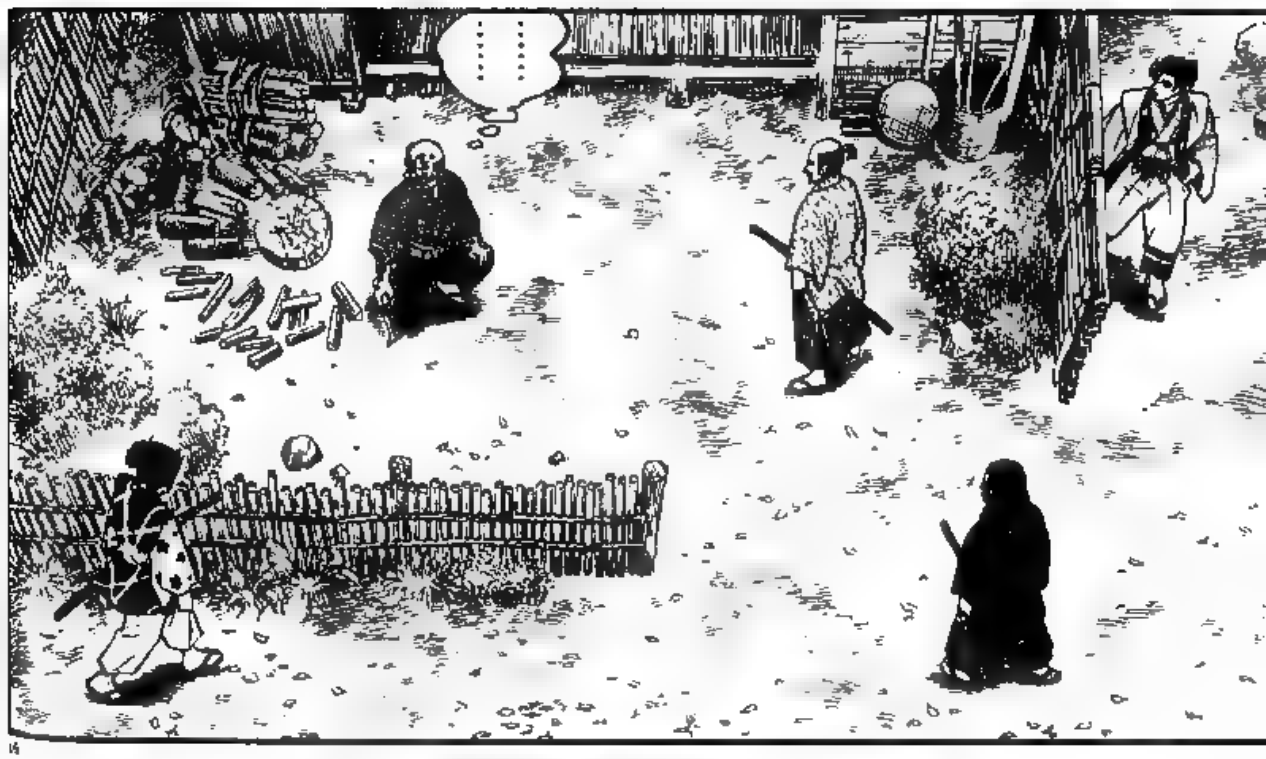
15

.....

.....

INOUE KANBEE-DONO...
.....

DON'T PERSIST IN YOUR DECEPTION, KANBEE-DONO!
I'M CALLED KANSUKE.
WHAT !?


.....

THAT NIGHT, A MAN CLAD IN FLAMES LED A SOLO RAID, AIMING FOR THE OGOSHOSAMA (IEYASU)'S LIFE...
AFTER THE FALL OF THE OSAKA CASTLE, WE GOT INFORMATION FROM THE KOGA SHINOBI WHO BECAME TOKUGAWA'S EMPLOEEYS.

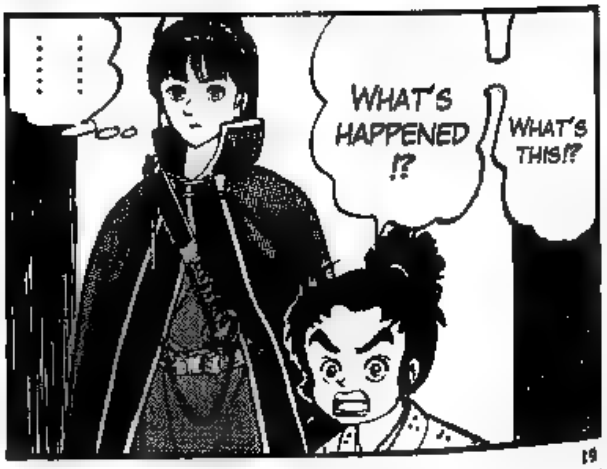
.....
THOSE BURN SCARS ARE AN UNSHAKEABLE PROOF!!
IT WAS YOU, INOUE KANBEE-DONO!!


.....
.....
.....

DON'T SAY IT TO THE THE OTHERS, KOHYOTA...
IT WAS TRAINING I'VE DONE SINCE I WAS LITTLE...
IS IT SO SURPRISING?
YOU'VE SURPRISED ME!! YOU'VE GRABBED FISH WITH YOUR HANDS AND SUDDENLY CAUGHT THEM!!

WHAT'S HAPPENED!? IT'S STILL EARLY AND YOU CAN ALL ALREADY GO HOME!?
WHAT !?
WE'VE BEEN TOLD BY SENSEI THAT WE CAN GO HOME ALREADY FOR TODAY.
EEEH... I WONDER WHY...
DON'T COME IN, KOHYOTA!!

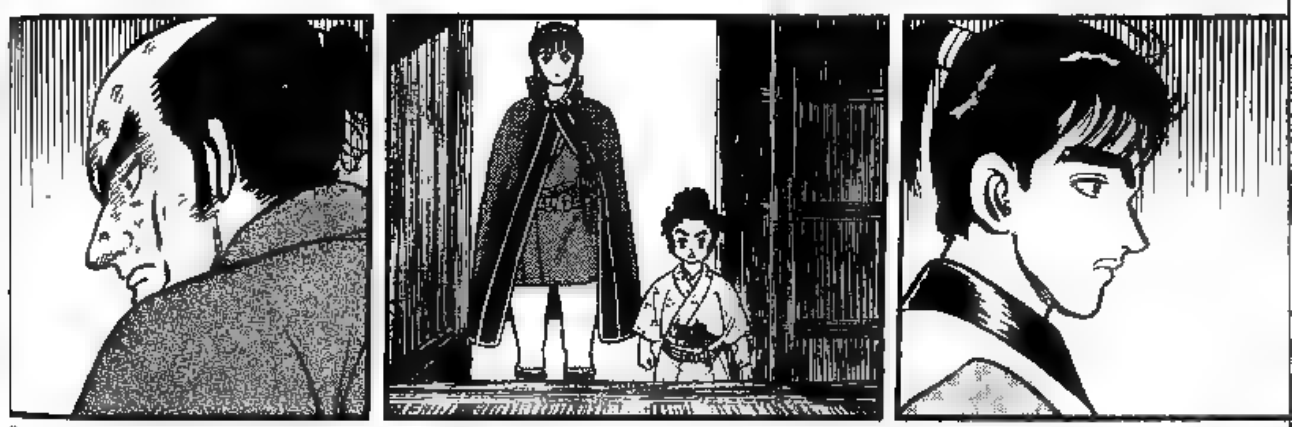
GET OUT...

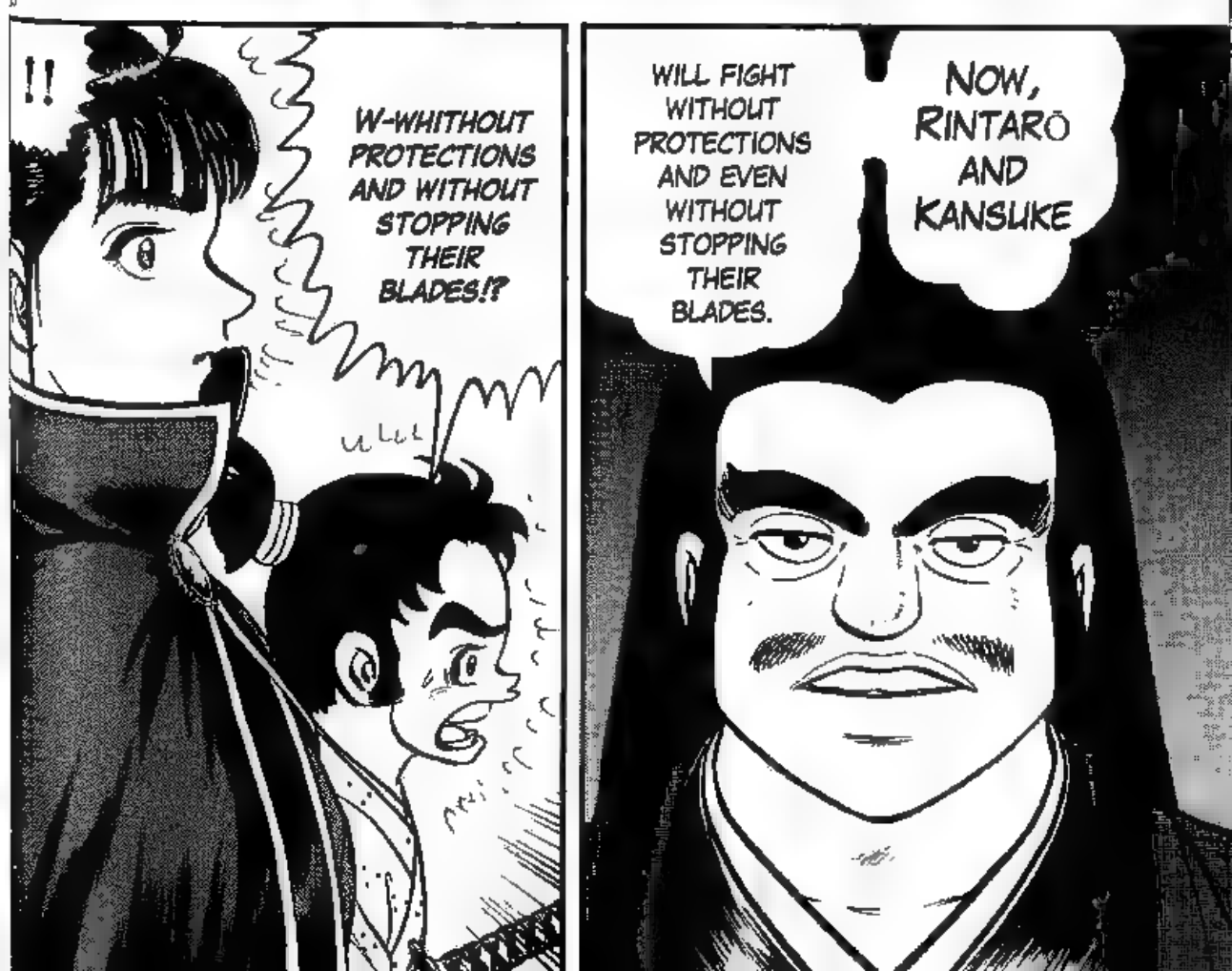

.....
WHAT'S HAPPENED !?
WHAT'S THIS!?

THAT'S ENOUGH, GET OUT!!

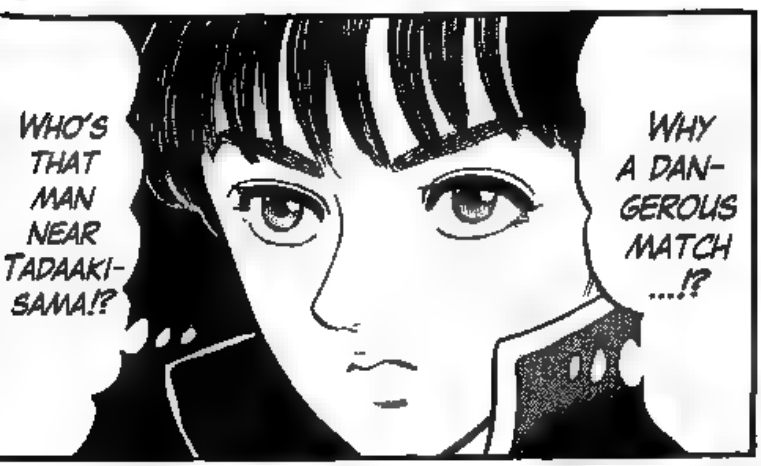
.....
HAS K-KANSUKE-SAN DONE SOMETHING !?

NO, I DON'T MIND. KOHYŌTA, WATCH!!



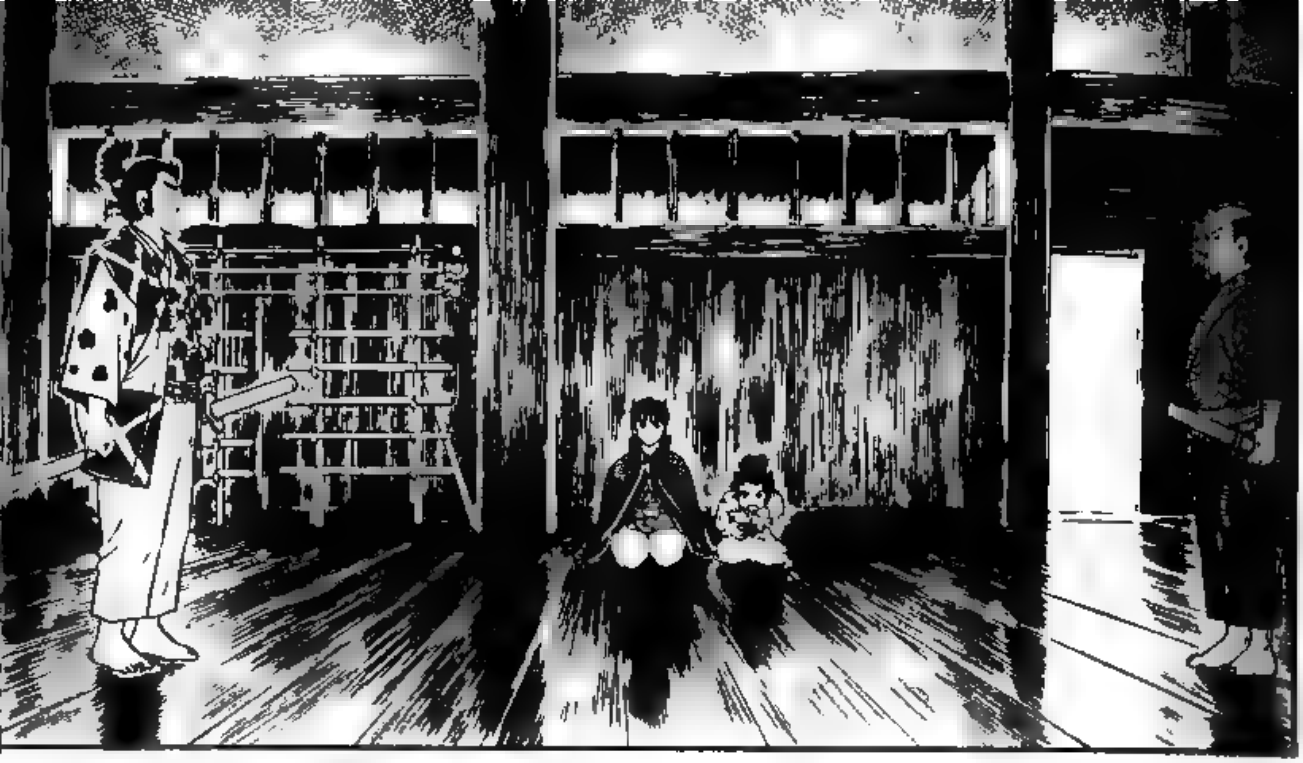

!!
W-WHITHOUT PROTECTIONS AND WITHOUT STOPPING THEIR BLADES!?
NOW, RINTARŌ AND KANSUKE WILL FIGHT WITHOUT PROTECTIONS AND EVEN WITHOUT STOPPING THEIR BLADES.

THIS FENCING MATCH!!
SHUT UP, SIT DOWN AND WATCH
NO WAY... THEY'LL GET SERIOUS WOUNDS...


WHO'S THAT MAN NEAR TADAAKI-SAMA!?
WHY A DAN-GEROUS MATCH ...!?

ドックン ドックン
バブルバブル

OR THAT HE'S AIMING AT IEYASU'S LIFE...?
DID THEY FIND OUT KANBEE-DONO'S IDENTITY!?



IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS MATCH... TO KILL ME!?
EVEN WITH A WOODEN SWORD, IF I WAS HIT BY HIS POWERFUL STRIKES, I'D DIE...

AND EVEN IF I WON, AFTER HIM, ANOTHER GENIUS, KYOSUKE, WOULD COME...
FOR ABILITY, THIS GENIUS, RINTARO, IS SUPERIOR TO ME...

AND THEN EXE-CUTE ME.
ドッ
ドッ
ドッ
IN ANY CASE, NOW THAT MY IDENTITY HAS BEEN REVEALED, THEY'LL WANT TO KILL ME HERE OR INJURE ME GRAVELY...
I WON'T DIE UNTIL I KILL IEYASU !!
ドッ
I CAN'T BE KILLED YET!!
ドッ
ドッ
COME !!

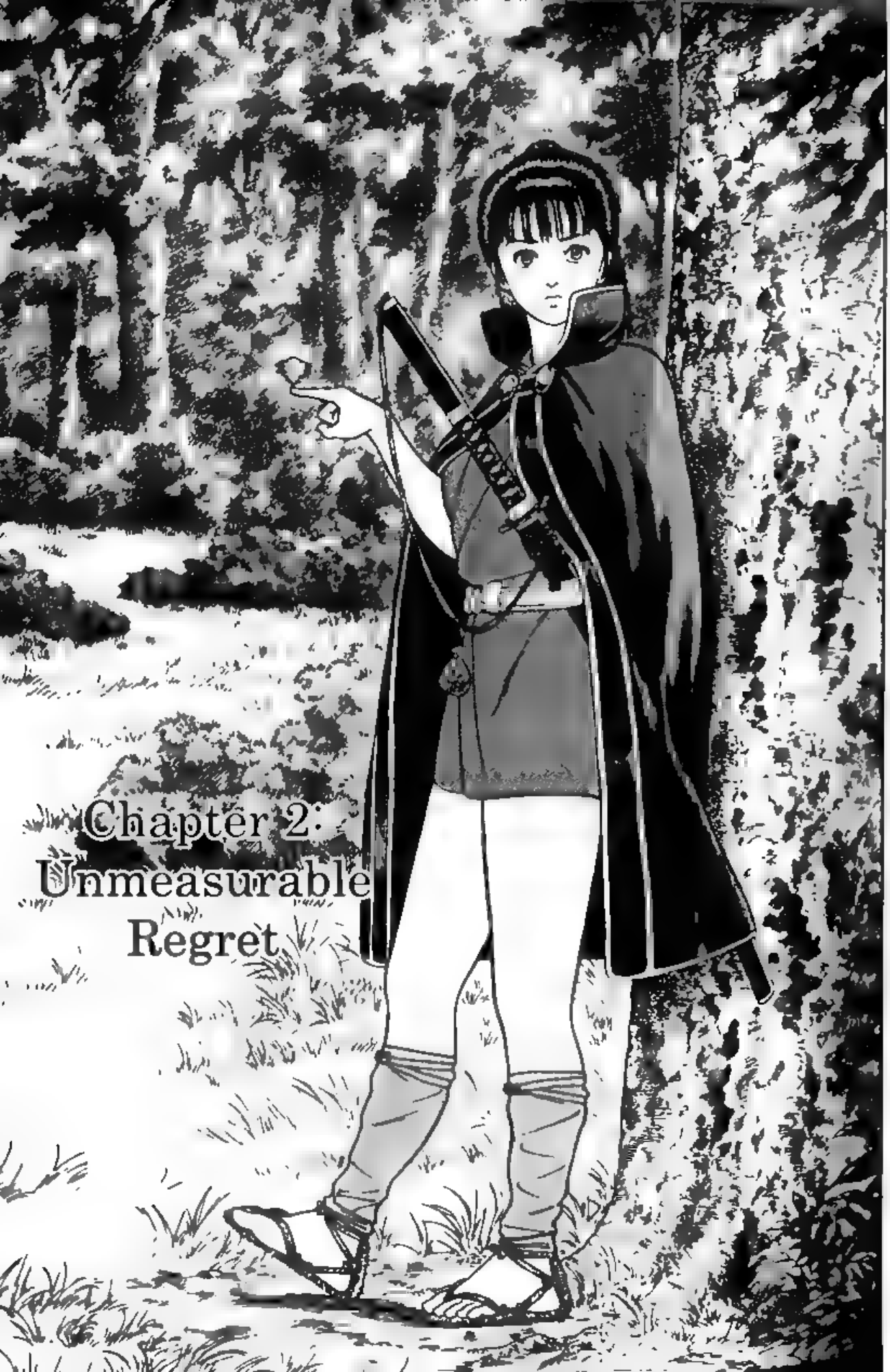
WHAT DO I DO!?..... WHAT DO I DO!?
ESCAP-ING!?
COULD I ESCAPE!?
ドッグ
ドッグ
ドッグ
IF KANBEE-DONO, WHOSE ONLY REASON TO LIVE IS TO KILL IEYASU... DIED HERE...
...AS A MAN... AND AS A FENCER, THAT WOULD BE...
25
THEY'RE SAYING TO ME TO ESCAPE!?
NO, WAIT... WHAT IF, PERHAPS...
AND HANDED OVER TO HONDA MASAZUMI AND BE DEALT WITH.
I COULD HAVE BEEN TIED UP AT THAT PLACE,
THE EXIT IS OPEN.
KANBEE-DONO... IN THIS SITUATION YOU'D BE BETTER OFF ESCAP-ING...

TADAAKI-DONO AND EVEN KYOSUKE ARE SITTING DOWN...ALSO, RINTARO IS IN A FARTHER POSITION FROM THE EXIT THAN ME...
WITHOUT DOING THAT, THEY MADE ME DO A MATCH LIKE THIS...
ドッ
ドッ
ドッ
ARE THEY TELLING ME TO RUN!?
ドッ
ドッ
ドッ

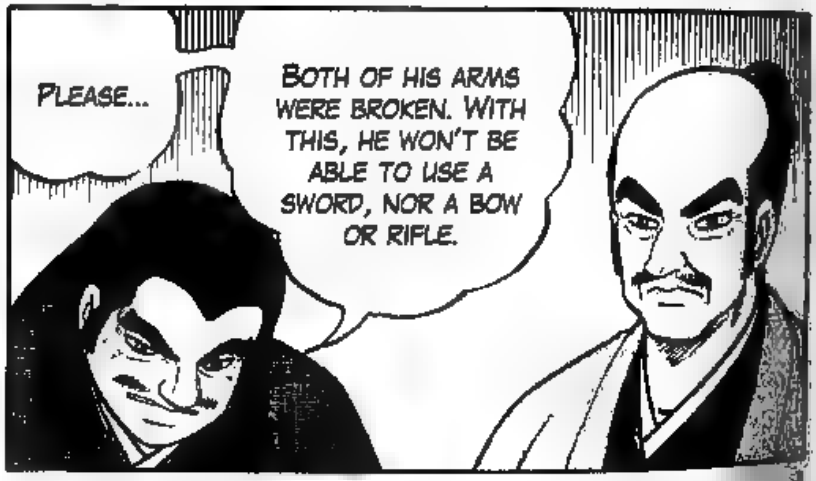
THAT'S RIGHT!! RUN AWAY!!

!!
!!

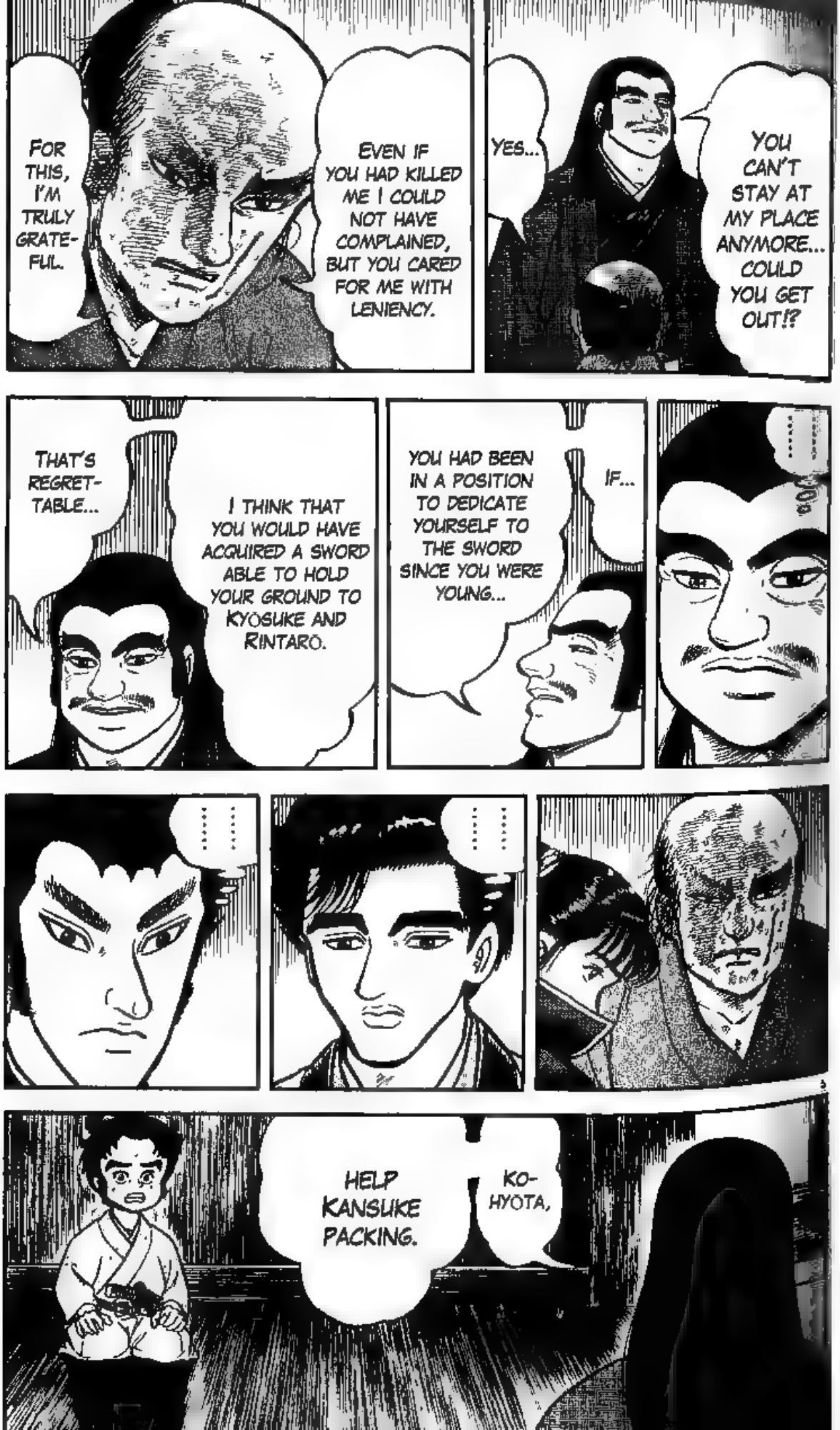
STOOOOOOOP!!



# Chapter 2: Unmeasurable Regret


PLEASE...
BOTH OF HIS ARMS WERE BROKEN. WITH THIS, HE WON'T BE ABLE TO USE A SWORD, NOR A BOW OR RIFLE.

THE REST IS UP TO YOU.
.....
.....
IT SEEMS YOU'RE CALLED INOUE KANBEE-DONO, A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF KATŌ KIYOMASA-SAMA...
KAN-SUKE... NO,


FOR THIS, I'M TRULY GRATE-FUL.
EVEN IF YOU HAD KILLED ME I COULD NOT HAVE COMPLAINED, BUT YOU CARED FOR ME WITH LENIENCY.
YES...
YOU CAN'T STAY AT MY PLACE ANYMORE... COULD YOU GET OUT!?
THAT'S REGRET-TABLE...
I THINK THAT YOU WOULD HAVE ACQUIRED A SWORD ABLE TO HOLD YOUR GROUND TO KYOSUKE AND RINTARO.
YOU HAD BEEN IN A POSITION TO DEDICATE YOURSELF TO THE SWORD SINCE YOU WERE YOUNG...
IF...
.....
.....
.....
HELP KANSUKE PACKING.
KO-HYOTA,

KOHYOTA, PLEASE UNDER-STAND.
IT'S NOT THAT WE WON'T SEE EACH OTHER EVER AGAIN.
WHY ARE YOU LEAVING TOO, AZUMI-SAN!?
I BEG YOU!! DON'T GO AWAY, AZUMI-SAN...
.....

KOHYOTA, STOP!!
AZUMI-SAN, WHERE'RE YOU GOING!? TELL ME THE PLACE!! I'LL COME VISIT!!
FOR US, IT'S BETTER IF WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THEY'RE GOING!!
DON'T FOLLOW THEM!!
GH...
CAN YOU DO SOME-THING!?

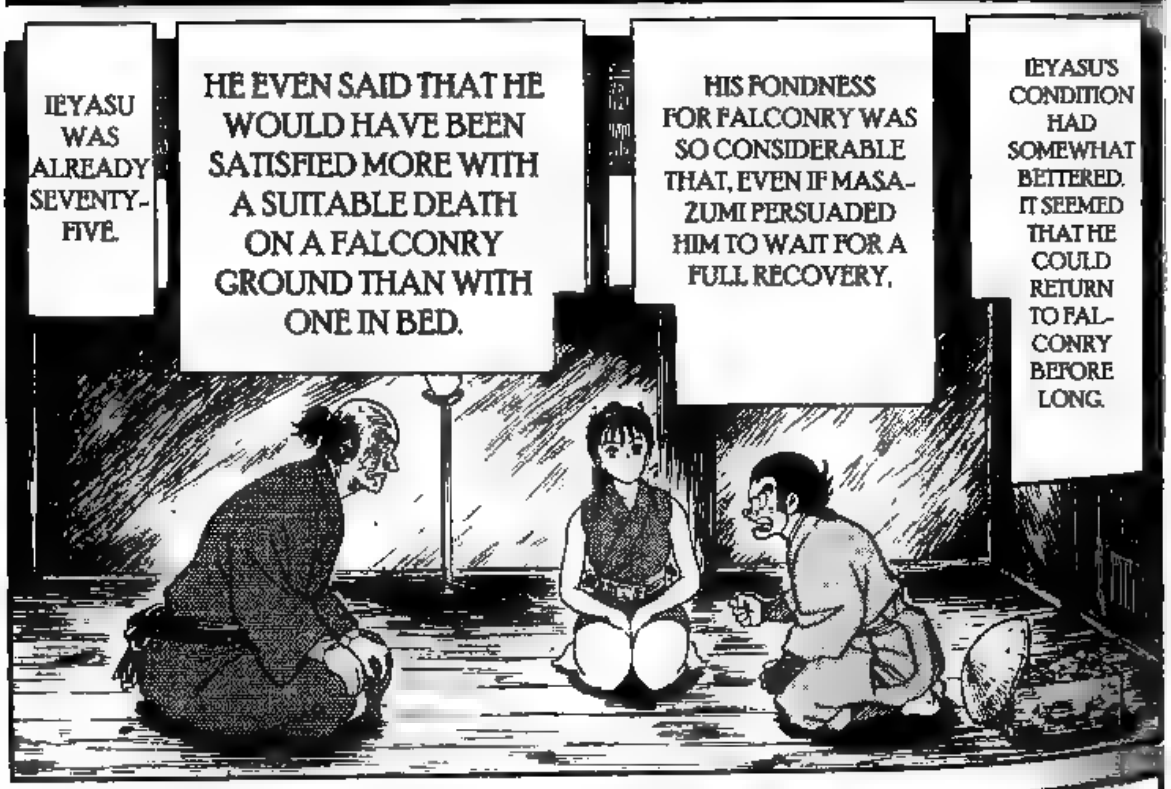
.....
GRAMPA TAUGHT ME...I THINK THAT THE BONE WILL GRADUALLY ADHERE IF WE KEEP IT FIRM WITH PLANKS.
BUT...
UNLESS THE MUSCLES HAVE'T BEEN DAMAGED...

...AZUMI INFORMED TOBI-ZARU.
THAT NIGHT, KANBEE HAD NIGHT-MARES DUE TO HIS HIGH FEVER.

CURSE YOU, IEYASUUUUUUUUU!!
¡HOOON

A SERIOUS ILLNESS!?
THAT'S ADVANCED AGE!!
IEYASU, EVEN AFTER HAVING BEEN ATTACKED AT A HUNTING GROUND, CONTINUED FALCONRY, BUT...
AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, HE SUDDENLY CEASED ATTENDING.
TOBIZARU GROPED FOR INFORMATION...
AND CAME TO KNOW THAT THEY SAID IEYASU WAS SICK IN BED.
HOW MUCH A SERIOUS ILLNESS IT IS, I DON'T...
.....
HE WON'T DIE!
AS IF HE'D DIED FORM AN ILLNESS OR SOMETHING!!
IEYASUUUU!!!
.....

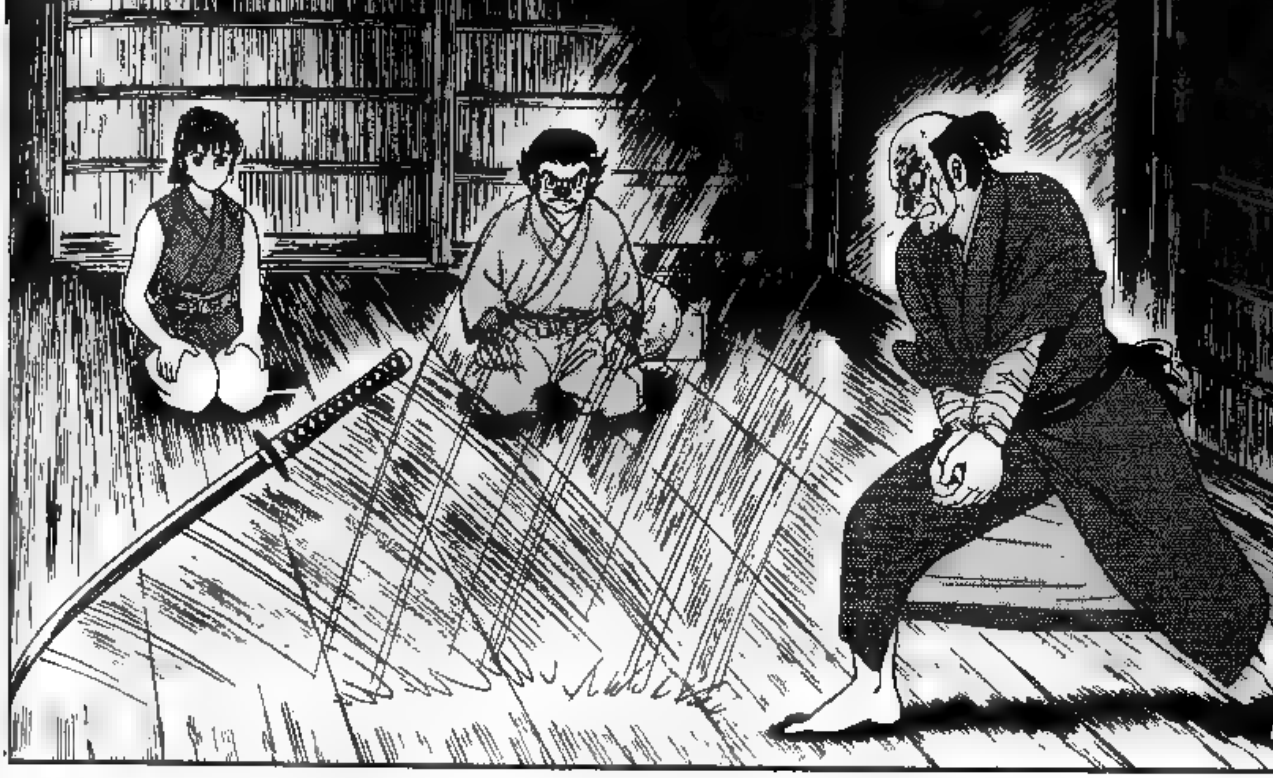
TOBIZARU EAVESDROPPED ON A CONVERSATION BETWEEN HONDA MASAZUMI AND ONO TADAAKI.
-THEN, ON MARCH...


IEYASU WAS ALREADY SEVENTY-FIVE.
HE EVEN SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE BEEN SATISFIED MORE WITH A SUITABLE DEATH ON A FALCONRY GROUND THAN WITH ONE IN BED.
HIS FONDNESS FOR FALCONRY WAS SO CONSIDERABLE THAT, EVEN IF MASAZUMI PERSUADED HIM TO WAIT FOR A FULL RECOVERY,
IEYASU'S CONDITION HAD SOMEWHAT BETTERED. IT SEEMED THAT HE COULD RETURN TO FALCONRY BEFORE LONG.

DAMN YOU, IEYASU!! HAVE YOU PERCEIVED YOUR TIME OF DEATH!?
I SEEEEE!! SO THAT DAMN IEYASU IS PRATTLING LIKE THAT, EEEEEH!?

IF I LET THIS MOMENT SLIP BY, I PROBABLY WON'T HAVE ANOTHER CHANCE TO KILL HIM!
THAT'S IT!! IT'LL BE AT FALCONRY!!
DON'T TREMBLEEEE!!
GH... DAMN FINGEERS!
PLEEEEEASE!!

¡EYASUUUUUUUU!!



UGHH...

BWAAAH HA HA HAAA!
FOR WHAT PURPOSE... DID I SURVIVE, I WONDER...?
TO NOT BEING ABLE TO HOLD A SWORD,
OR EVEN TO USE A BOW!?
I THO-UGHT TO
KILL IEYASU AND BE SLAIN THERE BY KYOSUKE AND RINTARO!!
BUT EVEN THAT WON'T COME TRUE!!

WITHOUT DISPELLING HIDE-YORI-GIMI AND YODO-DONO'S HATRED...
WITHOUT GETTING REVENGE FOR MY FATHER, MOTHER, BIG SISTER... FOR MY LORD, KIYOMASA-SAMA...
I CAN'T DIEEEE! I CAN'T DIE LIKE THIIIS!!
WITH BOTH MY ARMS BROKEN...
BEARING SUCH BURN SCARS ON MY FACE ...

HOW COULD I MEET THEM ...
IF I LEFT THINGS LIKE THIS, AFTER I'M DEAD...
I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO FACE ANYONE OF THEM, RIGHT!?

ビリー
ガバッ
HOOOO
……
ドドド

……
……
カア
カア
カア
カア

YO-HO!
HEAVE-HO!
AH HA HA
HA HA HA
ドド
KYUU HA HA HAAA!
NOW YOU'VE
DONE IT!!

AH HA HA HA
KYAH HA HA HAAA!
.....
Uuuu
HEY HEY, DON'T JUST MESS AROUND!
YOU MUST DO THE WHEAT PLANTS TREADING PROPERLY,
OR ELSE THE WHEAT WON'T GROW STRONG!
EEK EEK
.....
Oooo
SO THERE WAS EVEN THE POSSIBILITY OF A QUIET LIFE, EH...?
THAT TYPE OF LIFE-STYLE...
AH HAAA HA HA
EEK EEK

.....
SO I'VE KILLED HIS ENEMIES WHO WERE INTERFERING WITH THAT...
I'VE...CARRIED OUT MISSIONS SO THAT IEYASU COULD BUILD... A PEACEFUL WORLD WHERE PEOPLE COULD LIVE QUIETLY FOREVER... LIKE THAT...
IF...IEYASU WERE TO DIE NOW...
WOULD IT HURL THIS WORLD INTO TURMOIL AGAIN AND BRING BACK AN ERA OF WAR!?
KANBEE-DONO.
UHM!?

NOW IT'S THE ERA OF THE SECOND TOKUGAWA SHOGUN, HIDETADA...AND WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE COUNTRY WILL CONTINUE UNDER A THIRD...TOKUGAWA...
NO, IT'S NOT THAT CASE ANY-MORE.
THEN, IT MEANS THAT IEYASU'S OWN ROLE HAS ENDED AND HE'S ALREADY ENJOYING HIS REMAINING YEARS, RIGHT?
.....
IT'S LIKE YOU SAY!

IT'S NOT THAT IEYASU BUILT PEACE FOR HIS OWN AMBITION!!
WITH DIRTY TRICKS AND STRATEGIES HE JUST
STOLE FOR HIMSELF THE PEACEFUL
WORLD THAT TAIKO-SAMA (HIDEYOSHI) HAD ESTABLISHED!!
.....
HE CRUSHED THE LIFESTYLES AND THE LIVES OF COUNTLESS PERSONS WHO PROTECTED THE TOYOTOMI SOCIETY!!
WHERE SHOULD THAT UNMEASURABLE HATRED GO!?
.....

IEYASU HAS ACHIEVED HIS AMBITIONS...AND NOW HE'S LIVING HIS REMAING YEARS CONFORTABLY... PRAYING FOR A TRANQUIL DEATH...
SUCH A THING END ALL!?
BUT WOULD ...
THAT'S HOW HE SHOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE HUMAN WORLD!!
IEYASU SHOULD DIE NOW, TAKING ALL OF THAT WITH HIM!
EVEN NOW, DUE TO UNMEASURABLE REGRET AND HATRED, THOSE SOULS CAN'T GO ENTER HEAVEN...
MY WANTING TO KILL IEYASU, IS NOT JUST FOR A FEELING OF PERSONAL REVENGE!

I CAN'T ...
BUT...
IF I COULD... AT LEAST... WITH THIS SINGLE SWORD...

I'LL TAKE OVER THIS SWORD AND...
KANBEE-DONO'S WISH.
I'LL KILL IEYASU!!

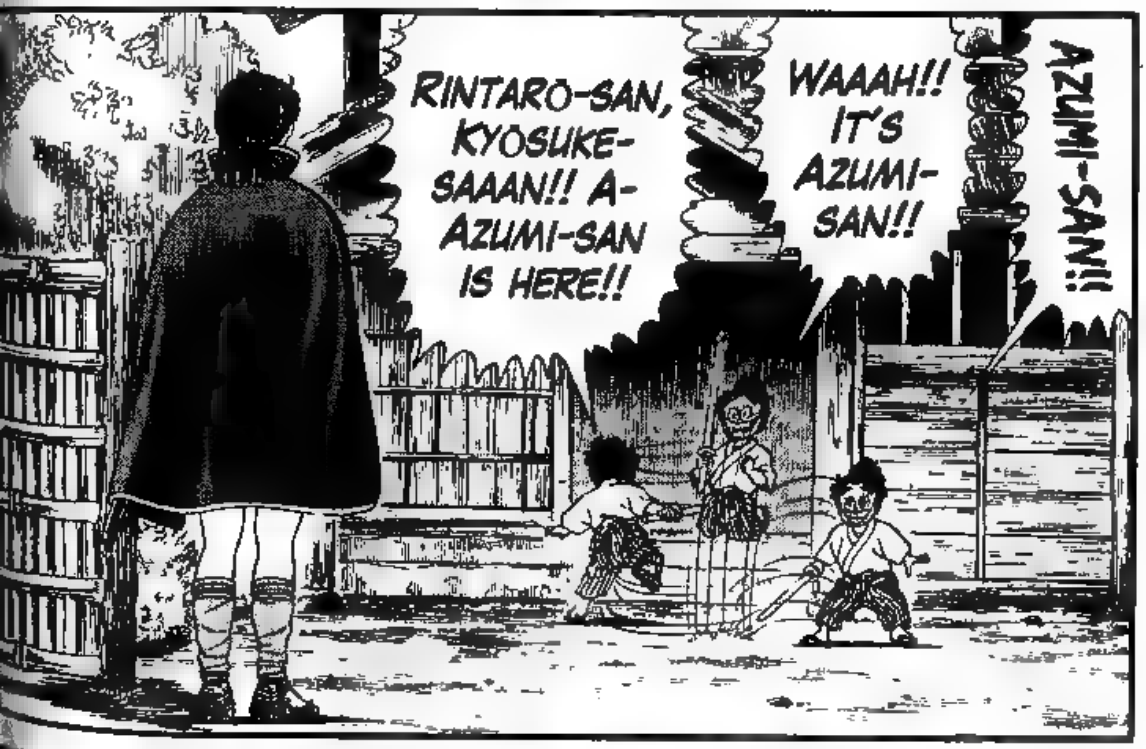
.....
.....
KYO SUKE AND RIN-TARO ...
YOU'LL HAVE TO FIGHT THOSE ...
THOSE TWO ARE REALLY PRODIGIES OF THE SWORD!

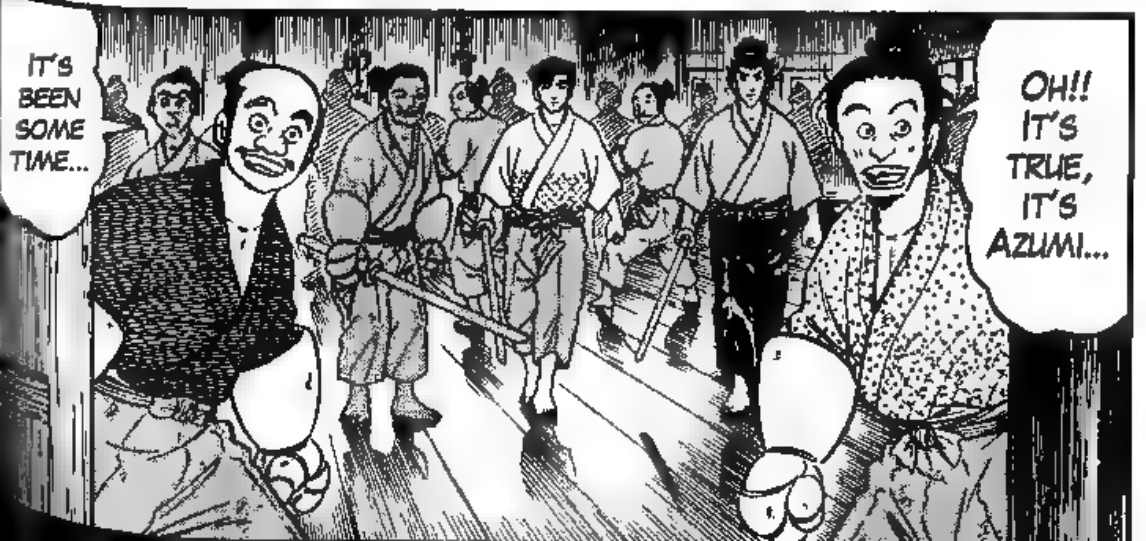
IF PEOPLE LIVE LIKE THAT, IT'S FINE...*
"...WHEN THE TIME COMES, BEING USEFUL TO A PERSON THAT YOU THINK IT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOURSELF...AND AT THAT TIME, EVEN RISKING YOUR LIFE FOR HIM!!
A... AZUMI...
WHO TAUGHT ME THAT WAS YOU, KAN-BEE-DONO!!

THAT'S FINE, RIGHT!?
EVERY-ONE...
GRAM-PA...
AH HA HA HA
KYAH HA HA HA
AZUMI...

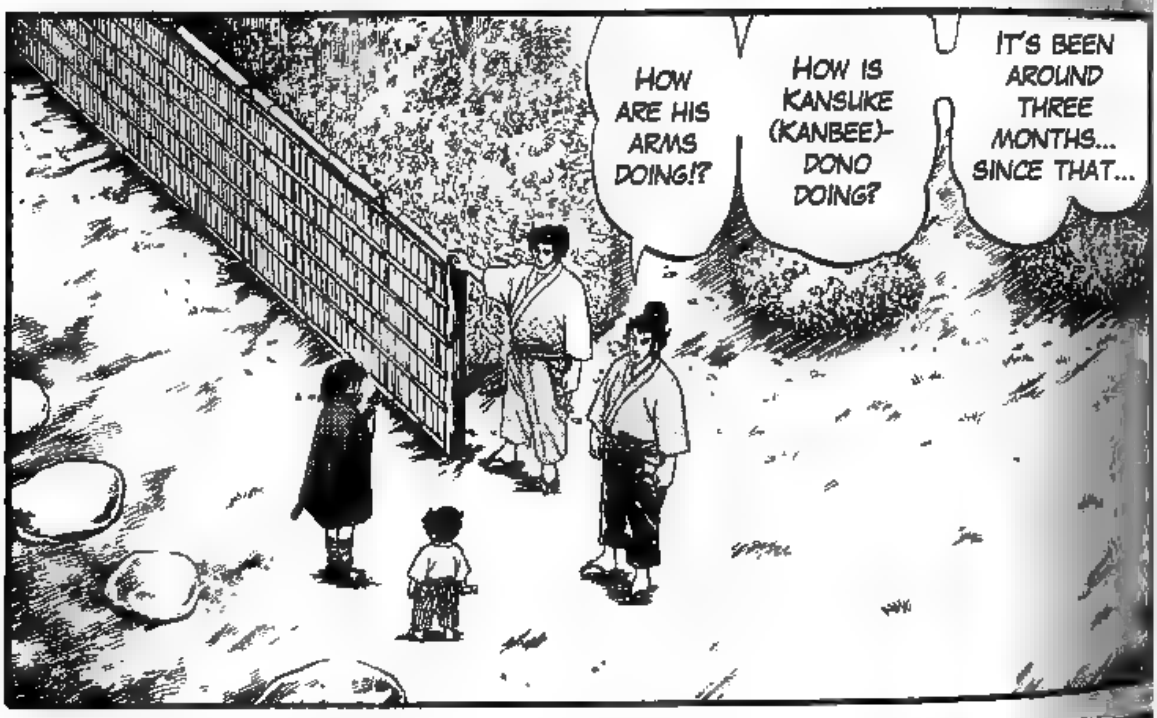
Chapter 3:
Warnings
of Attack

ORYAAA!
DABA
OOOOH!
YAAA!


RINTARO-SAN, KYOSUKE-SAAAN!! A-AZUMI-SAN IS HERE!!
WAAAH!! IT'S AZUMI-SAN!!
AZUMI-SAN!!


IT'S BEEN SOME TIME...
OH!! IT'S TRUE, IT'S AZUMI...

EVERYONE, KEEP TRAINING!


HOW ARE HIS ARMS DOING!?
HOW IS KANSUKE (KANBEE)-DONO DOING?
IT'S BEEN AROUND THREE MONTHS... SINCE THAT...

.....
.....
I SEE...
.....
HE CAN'T SWING A KATANA ANYMORE.
THE BONES HEALED, BUT

DO YOU EVEN SLEEP TOGETHER?
YES.
ARE YOU ALWAYS TOGETHER WITH KANSUKE-DONO?
NO, IMPOS-SIBLE...
...IS THAT SO!? ...KANSUKE AND AZUMI HAVE THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP!?...
YES.
YES, HE IS!!
IS TADAAKI-SENSEI AT HOME?
UHM !?
TODAY...I CAME TO APOLOGIZE FOR HAVING SO MANY LIES.

I WAS RAISED UP AND LEARNED BUJUTSU TO KILL PEOPLE SINCE I WAS VERY LITTLE.
THE FACT THAT I LIVED AS AN ACROBAT IS A LIE.
WHAT!?
!!
A PERSON WHO SHARES THE SAME GOAL WITH KANBEE-DONO.
AND NOW, I'M...
!!
!!
IT'S A PITY, BUT YOUR GUARDING IEYASU MADE US ENEMIES...

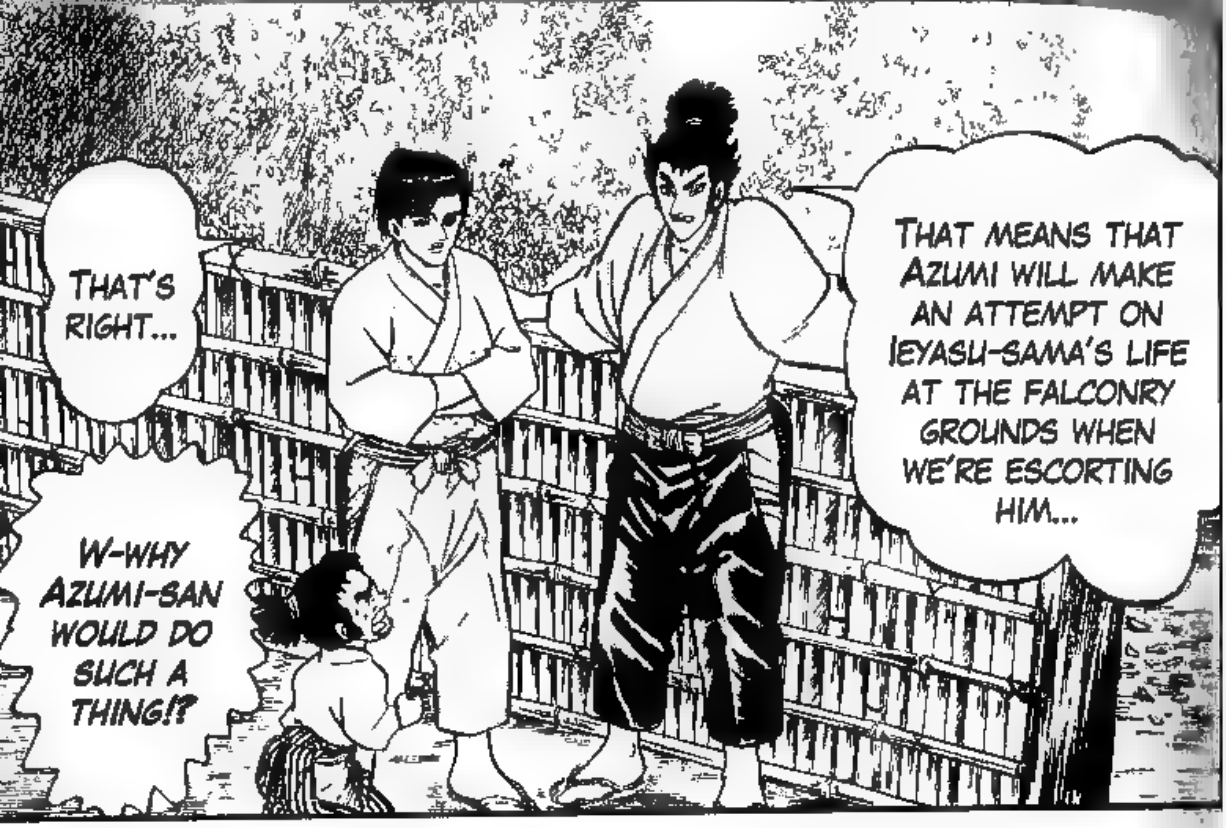
PLEASE FORGIVE ME.
I'M SORRY,
I'D CAUSE BIG TROUBLES FOR YOU TWO.
IF I WERE TO ACHIEVE MY GOAL,
.....
.....
GOOD BYE.

WHAT DOES SHE MEAN!?
EH!? WHAT!?
EH!?
EEEEEH !?
SAID THAT SHE'S
AZUMI...
YES...
IT DOESN'T SEEM A LIE OR A JOKE...
GOING TO KILL IEYASU-SAMA.

WHAT!!
IS THAT... THE TRUTH!?
YES.
I'M SORRY TO HAVE LIED TO YOU.
.....
.....

.....
I INTEND TO KILL IEYASU!!
ON BEHALF OF KANBEE-DONO,
HER GRAND-FATHER, EH?
OOOH..
FROM GRAMPA.
SINCE YOU WERE LITTLE ?
WHO HAVE YOU LEARNED THE SWORD FROM...
.....
I'VE NEVER HEARD ITS NAME.
I DON'T KNOW.
WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE SCHOOL ?

WOULD YOU SPAR WITH ME IN THE DOJO?
I'D LIKE TO SEE YOUR ABIL-ITY.
.....
.....
COME!!
I SEE...
.....
I CAN'T COMPLY WITH.
I'M SORRY, BUT...


THAT'S RIGHT...
W-WHY AZUMI-SAN WOULD DO SUCH A THING!?
THAT MEANS THAT AZUMI WILL MAKE AN ATTEMPT ON IEYASU-SAMA'S LIFE AT THE FALCONRY GROUNDS WHEN WE'RE ESCORTING HIM...

EH!?
AM I RIGHT!?

D-DON'T TELL ME YOU'D C-CUT HER DOWN!? YOU WOULDN'T DO SUCH A THING, RIGHT?
WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF SHE CAME, RINTARO-SAN, KYOSUKE-SAN!?

PLEASE, HELP HER!
A-AZUMI-SAN WILL GET KILLED...

EVEN IF WE DIDN'T DO THAT, THERE'RE A LOT OF OTHER GUARDS.

DON'T WORRY, KOHYOTA!!
OK? OK? PLEEEASE!
I SEE!! WE'LL FAKE HER DEATH...
AND WE CAN EVEN DISPOSE OF HER SOME-HOW!!
WE'LL STRIKE HER FIRST WITH THE BACK OF THE SWORD
AND SAY THAT WE'VE KILLED HER...
DON'T LET AZUMI-SAN GET KILLED BY THE OTHER GUARDS NO MATTER WHAT!! OK!?
I BEG YOU!! PLEASE!!
IT'S THE ONLY WAY...
THAT'S RIGHT...

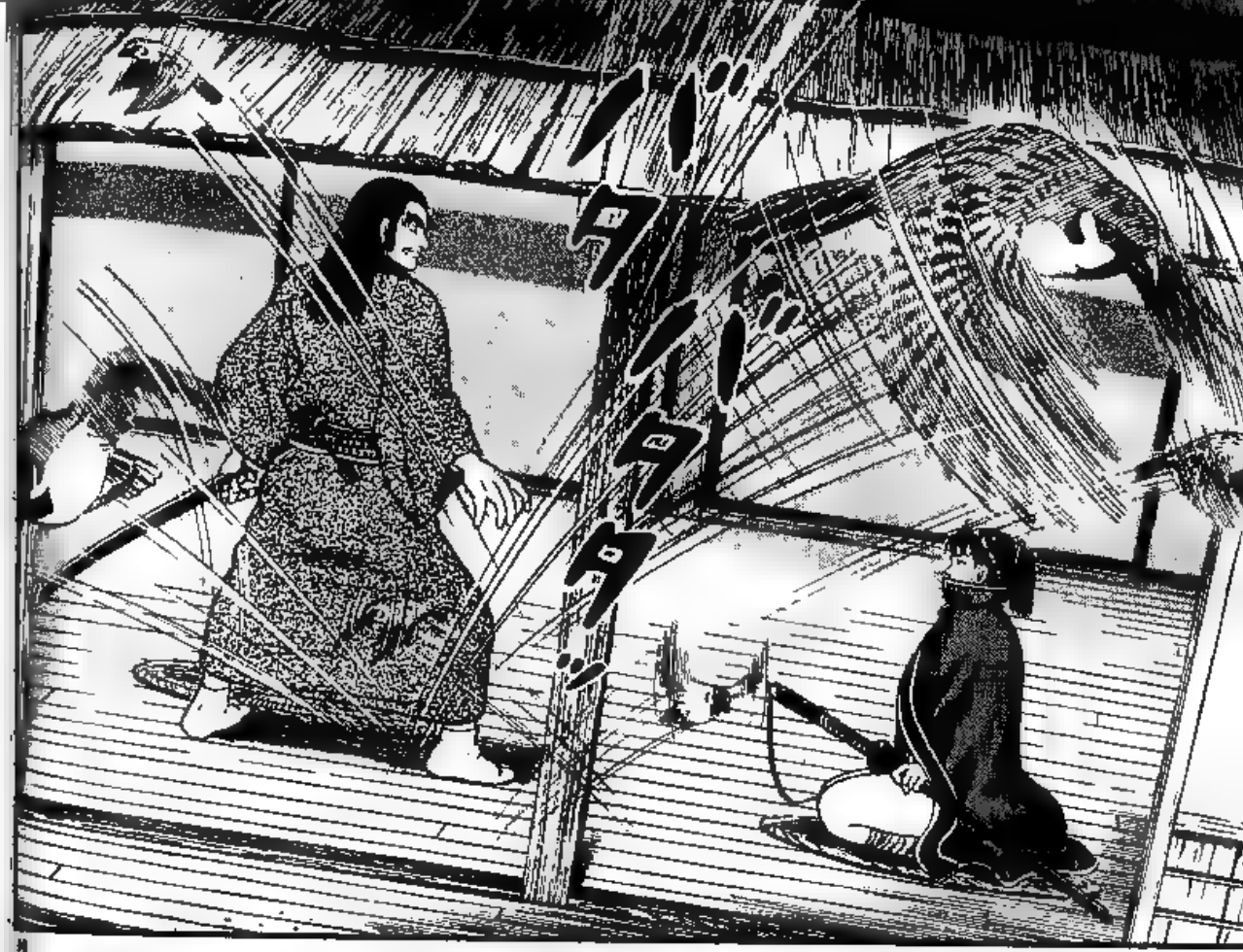
I SEE THAT YOU DON'T LIE...
FURTHER-MORE, THE FACT THAT YOU CAME PROPERLY
TO WHOM PROTECTS IEYASU-SAMA TO TELL THAT YOU'LL KILL HIM...
IS JUST SURPRIS-ING...
YOU'RE A GIRL, BUT...THAT COMPOSURE AND CONFIDENCE... ARE SPLENDID.
I, TADAAKI...
AM A LITTLE BEWILDERED...
HOWEVER, AZUMI...
KYOSUKE AND RINTARO ARE FAR STRONGER THAT WHAT YOU IMAGINE...

I BRAG THAT THEY'RE THE BEST MASTER-PIECES I'VE RAISED AND TAUGHT TO.
AND THEY'RE STILL IMPROV-ING...
.....
AZUMI...
DON'T YOU WANT TO DESIST!?

I DON'T WANT TO MAKE THOSE TWO... KILL A GIRL...
WILL HAVE TO KILL YOU...
THEN... KYOSUKE AND RINTARO
TO HAVE THEIR SWORDS STAINED WITH THE BLOOD OF A GIRL...
NEVER!!
I DON'T WANT FOR KYOSUKE AND RINTARO WHO I RAISED... WHO ARE MY PRIDE...
IF YOU SAY THAT YOU WON'T DESIST UNDER ANY CIRCUM-STANCES...
THERE-FORE...

I WILL KILL YOU HERE.
IN THE CASE OF MY SWORD, IT'S PASSED THROUGH MANY BATTLEFIELDS AND IT'S BEEN SOAKED IN SO MUCH BLOOD ALREADY!
GRAB YOUR KATANA!!

GRAB YOUR KATANA !!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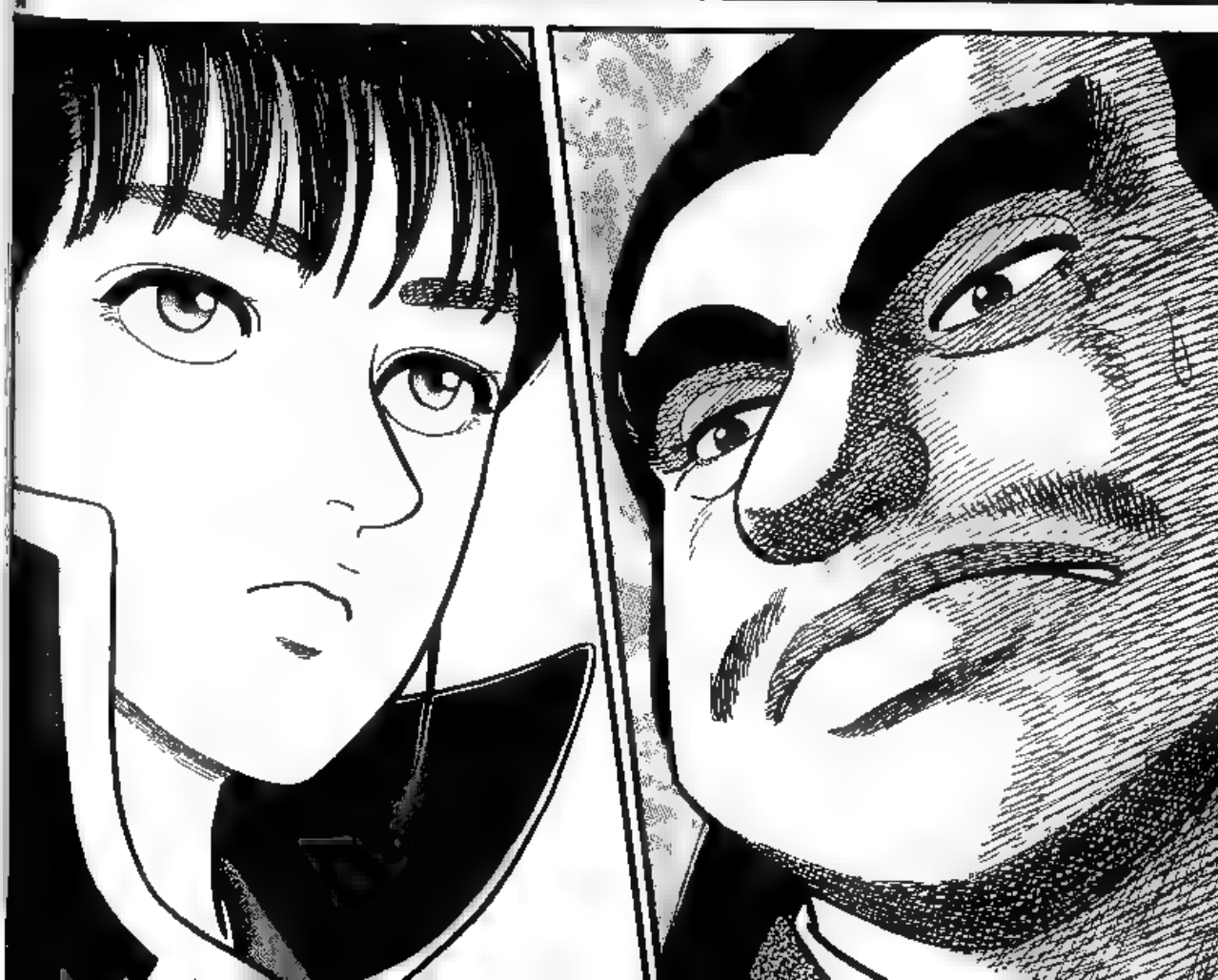
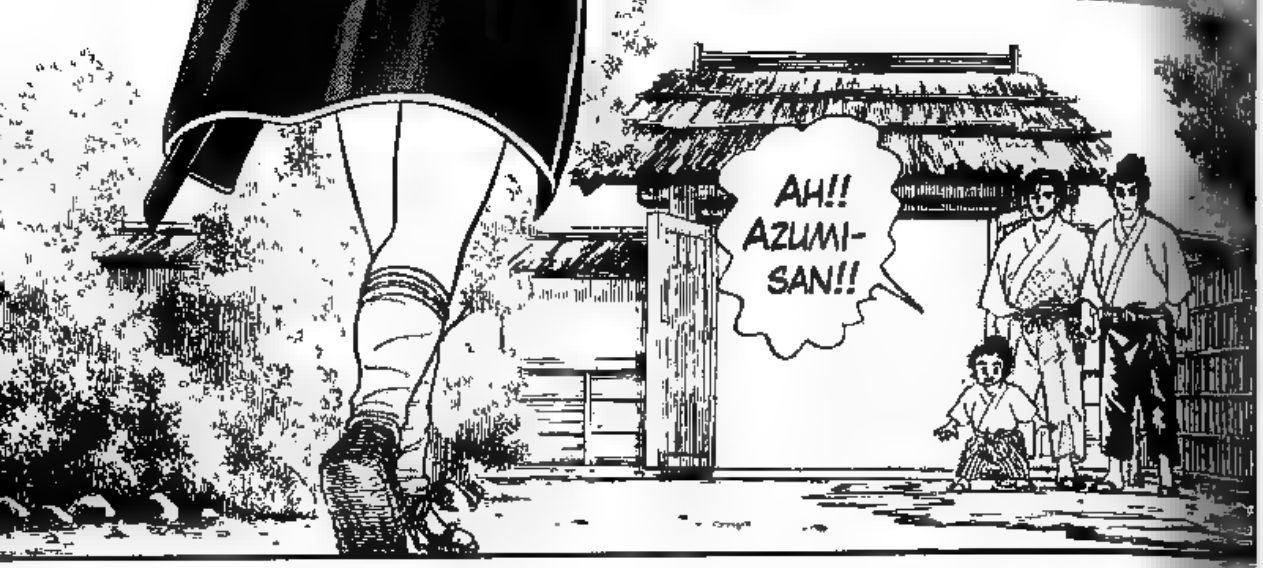


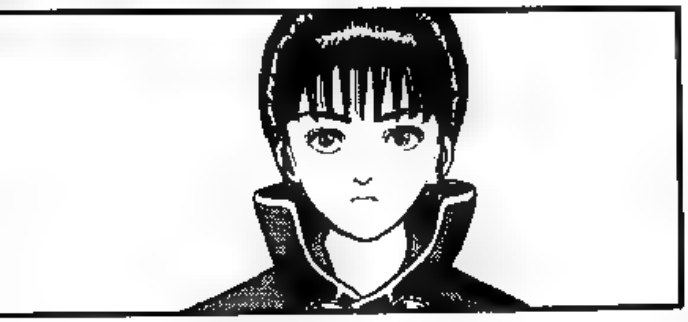
.....
HOW COULD YOU SEE THROUGH THAT I HAD NO INTENTION OF KILLING YOU!?
HOW !?

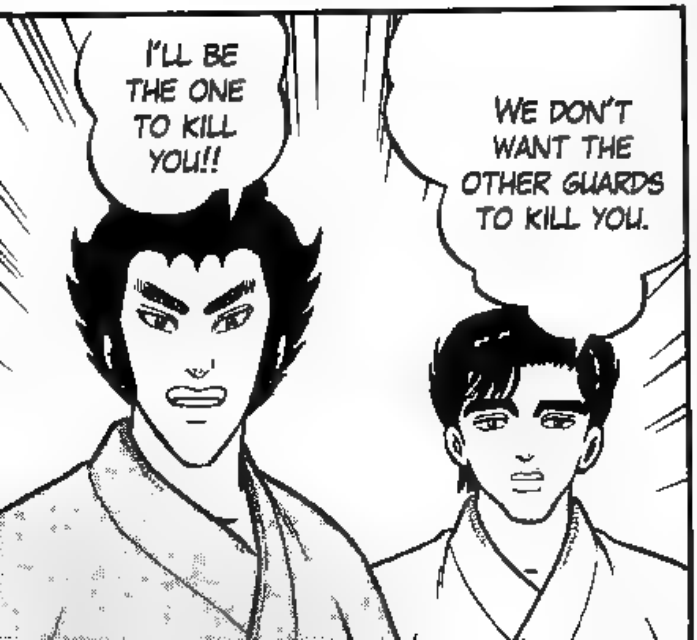
I JUST... SENSED IT.
HOW DID YOU!?
SENSED!?
SHE SAW THE TIP OF MY SWORD AND DODGED WITHOUT MOVING THE SHOULDERS...
SHE READ MY HEART HAD NO INTENTION TO KILL HER BUT TO SUPERFICIALLY HURT HER FOREHEAD...
IT'S NOT THAT SHE DIDN'T MOVE.

IN THOSE EYES THERE'S NO FEAR AT ALL...
MORE-OVER ...


AH!! AZUMI-SAN!!

WHEN YOU COME TO KILL IEYASU, WE'LL FIGHT WITHOUT HESITATION!!
AZUMI, WE UNDER-STAND.




I'LL BE THE ONE TO KILL YOU!!
WE DON'T WANT THE OTHER GUARDS TO KILL YOU.

COME STRAIGHT AT US!! GOT IT!?
DON'T BOTHER WITH THE OTHER GUARDS AND

LET'S FIGHT WITHOUT HESITATION!!
UNDERSTOOD!?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

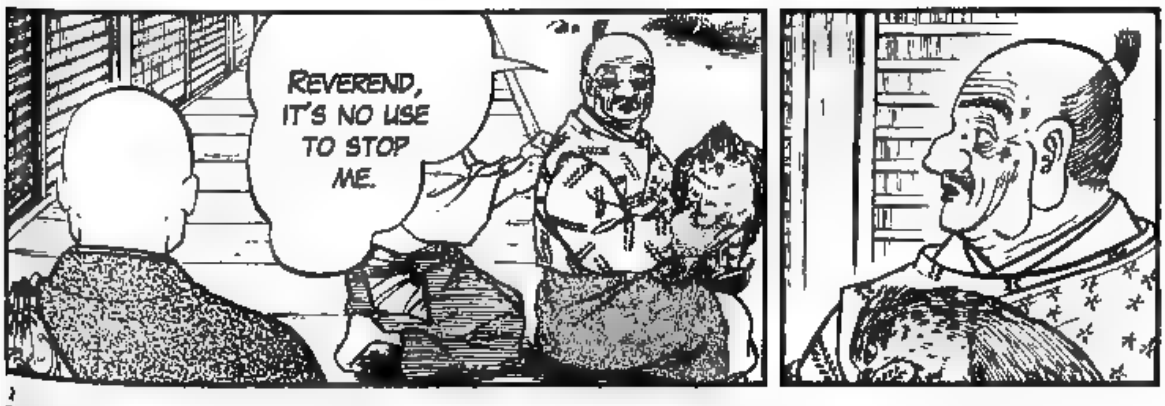
IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE...
IMPOS-SIBLE!!

.....
.....
KO-
HYOTA!!
I'LL TEACH YOU THE SKILL TO CATCH FISH WITH YOUR HANDS.

READ WHERE IT'LL MOVE NEXT...
LOOK... LOOK AT THIS BUTTER-FLY VEEEERY WELL!
AND A LITTLE BIT MORE ...!!
.....
.....
IT'S THE SAME WITH FISH!
IF YOU TRAIN, YOU'LL BECOME ABLE TO DO IT FOR SURE!

THANK YOU FOR TAKING CARE OF ME, KOHYOTA!!

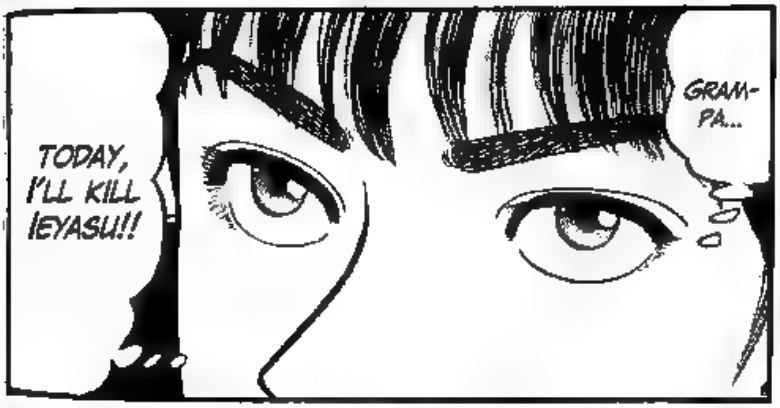
Chapter 4:
Ieyasu's
Final
Moments


REVEREND, IT'S NO USE TO STOP ME.

FOR MY TRAINED BODY, THE BEST CURE IS TO RUN AROUND IN THE COUNTRYSIDE!
IF I ENDURE MORE THAN THIS, I WON'T RECOVER.

PESTERS ME DAILY TO BE TAKEN OUT...
MORE-OVER, THIS ONE HERE...
I'M GOING!!
ALL RIGHT!
TENKAI WAS INVESTIGATING THE SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE OF OBATA GESSAI WITH WHOM CONTACT HAD BEEN INTERRUPTED, BUT...HE WAS STILL WITHOUT CLUES...

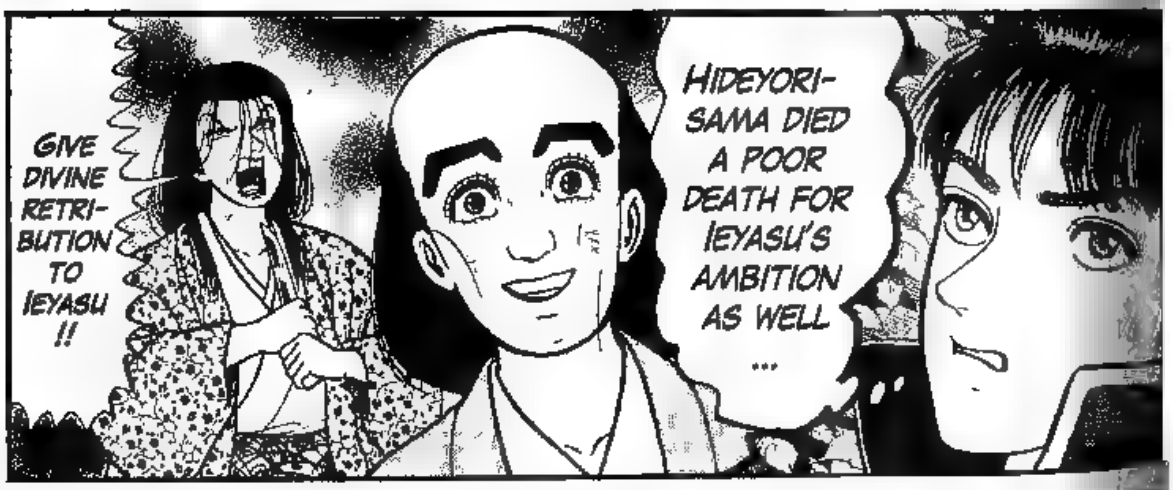
AZUMI HAD ALREADY GOT THE INFORMA-TION FROM TOBIZARU ABOUT WHEN AND IN
WHICH HUNTING GROUND IEYASU WOULD HAVE GONE FAL-CONRY
"TODAY!! IN THIS HUNTING GROUND!!" SHE WAS THINKING.


GRAM-PA...
TODAY, I'LL KILL IEYASU!!

.....

WATCH, GRAMPA ...!

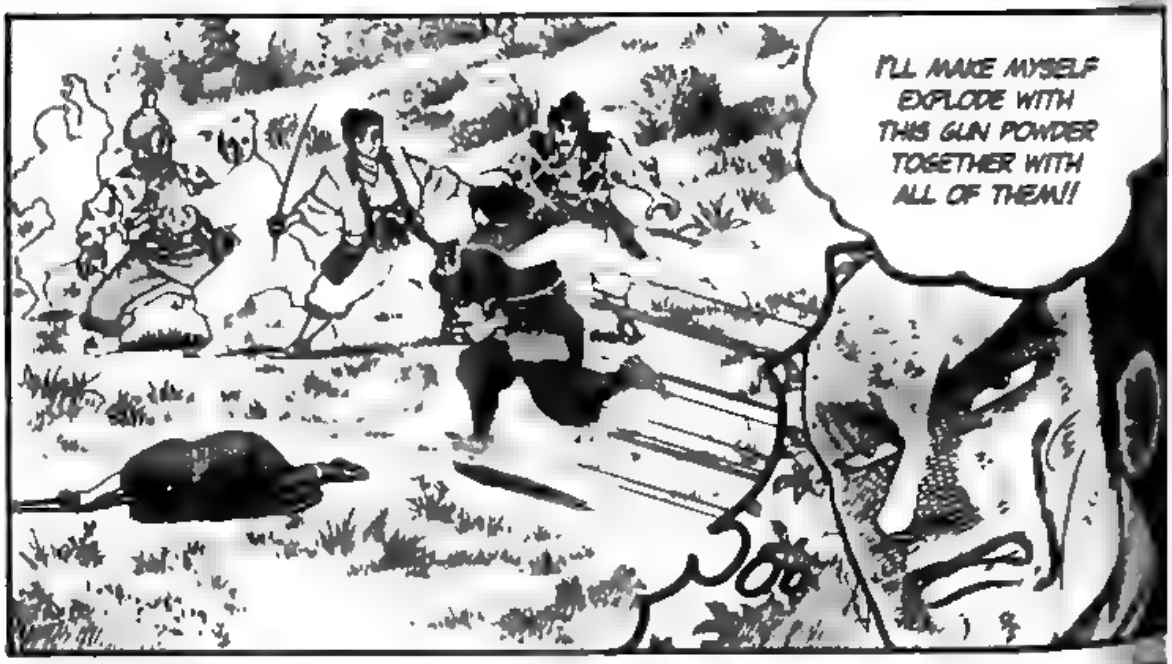
HYUGA...
AMAGI,
NAGA-RA,
WHAT UNREQUITED DEATHS YOU ALL HAD!
EVEN THOUGH YOU TOO CARRIED OUT MISSIONS FOR IEYASU...


GIVE DIVINE RETRI-BUTION TO IEYASU !!
HIDEYORI-SAMA DIED A POOR DEATH FOR IEYASU'S AMBITION AS WELL ...

RESPON-SIBILITY...
THAT'S HOW HE SHOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE HUMAN WORLD!!
EVEN NOW, DUE TO UN-MEASURABLE REGRET AND HATRED, THOSE SOULS CAN'T GO TO HEAVEN... IEYASU SHOULD DIE NOW, TAKING ALL OF THAT WITH HIM!

KYOSUKE AND RINTARO ARE FAR STRONGER THAN WHAT YOU IMAGINE.
EXACTLY!
I DON'T WANT FOR THEIR SWORDS TO DRINK A GIRL'S BLOOD...
.....
I SEE... TOBIZARU RESEARCHED THIS VERY WELL...EVEN WHERE THEY'RE GOING TO TURN...THIS MEANS THAT THEY'RE GOING TO PASS FROM HERE FOR SURE...

IF AZUMI WAS KILLED BY KYOSUKE AND RINTARO...
.....
AND COULDN'T KILL IEYASU..


I'LL MAKE MYSELF EXPLODE WITH THIS GUN POWDER TOGETHER WITH ALL OF THEM!!

I'M SORRY, FORGIVE ME...
AT THAT TIME, I'LL BE TAKING EVEN KYOSUKE AND RINTARO WITH ME...

HE'S HERE !!

KANBEE-DONO, I'LL DO IT, FOR SURE!!

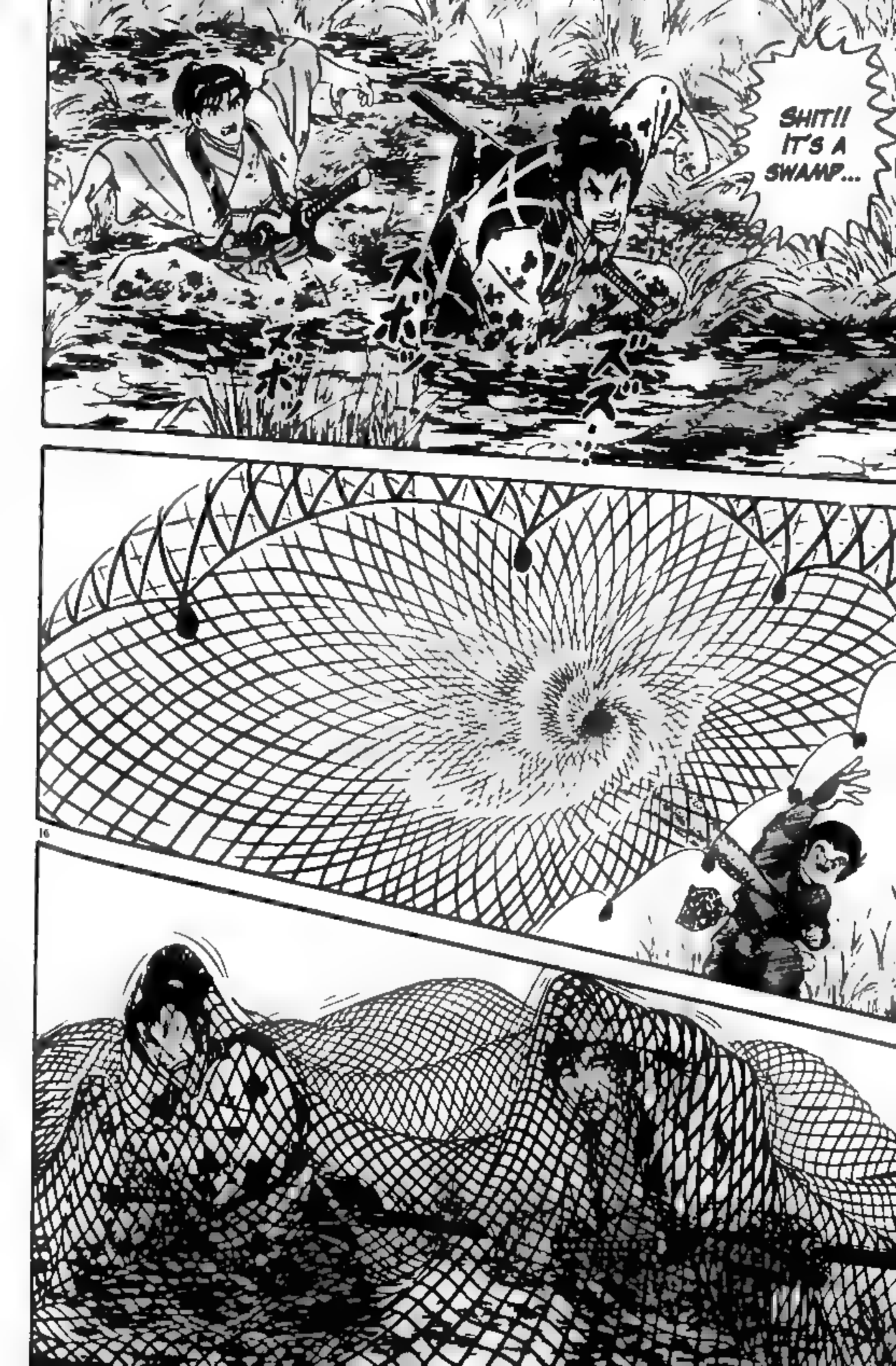
ARE YOU SURE THAT THERE WILL BE AN ATTACK TODAY!?
THERE'S THE POSSIBILITY!! SO, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I SAY IT,
WHEN THEY APPEAR, ME AND KYOSUKE WILL JUMP OUT AT THEM AND STRIKE!!
YOU ALL WILL PROTECT IEYASU-SAMA AND SURROUND HIM IMME-DIATELY!!
LOOK!!
RIN-TARO!!

OH!!
AZUMI !!
HAVE THEY SHOWN UP!?

AZUMI,
GIVE UP!!

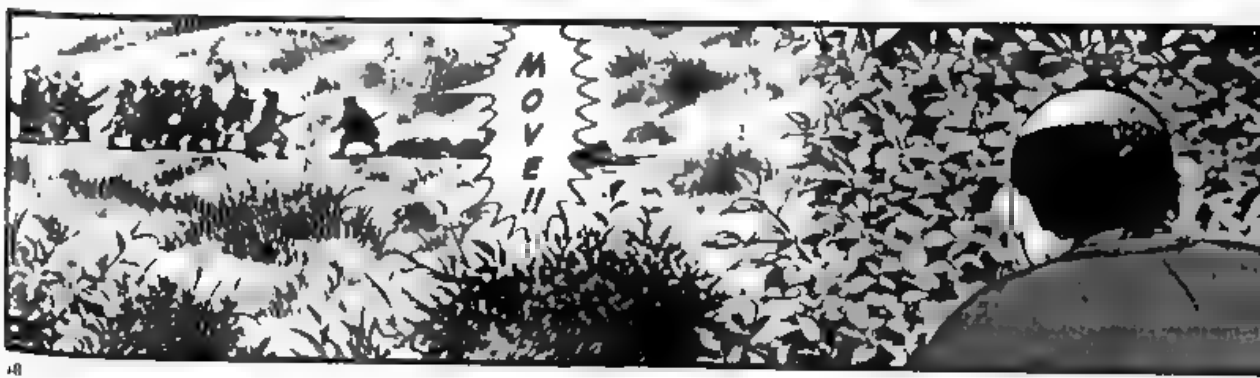
AH!! AZUMI...
IT'S A WOMAN !!
A WOMAN !!
HEY WOMAN, WHAT'-ARE YOU...

I WON'T KILL ANY WHO DON'T OPPOSE ME!!
MOVE AWAY!! MY GOAL IS ONLY IEYASU!!
STEP ASIDE!!
AREN'T YOU AZUMI WHO STAYED AT ONO-SENSEI'S PLACE?
W-WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO!?

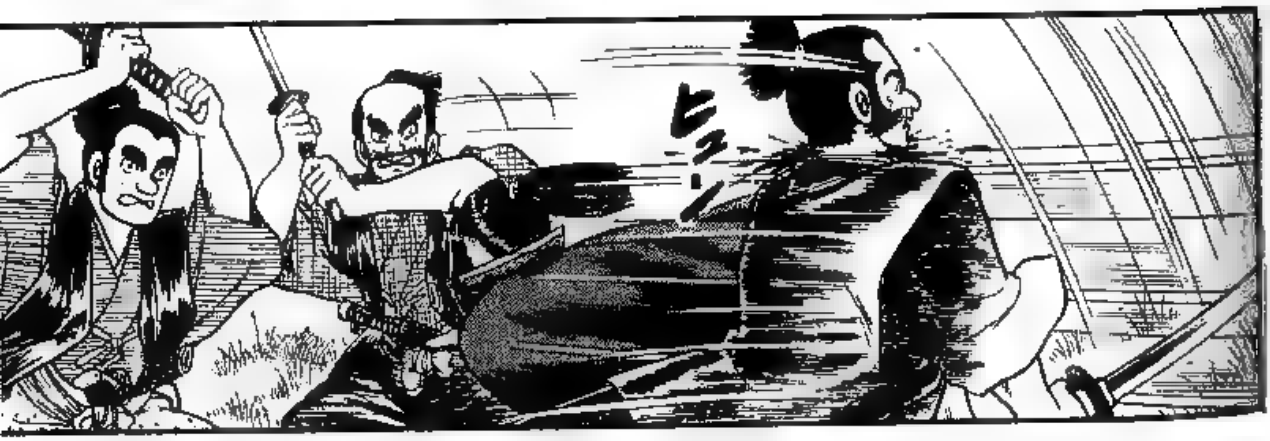

SHIT!! IT'S A SWAMP...
ズボッ
ズボッ
ズズ

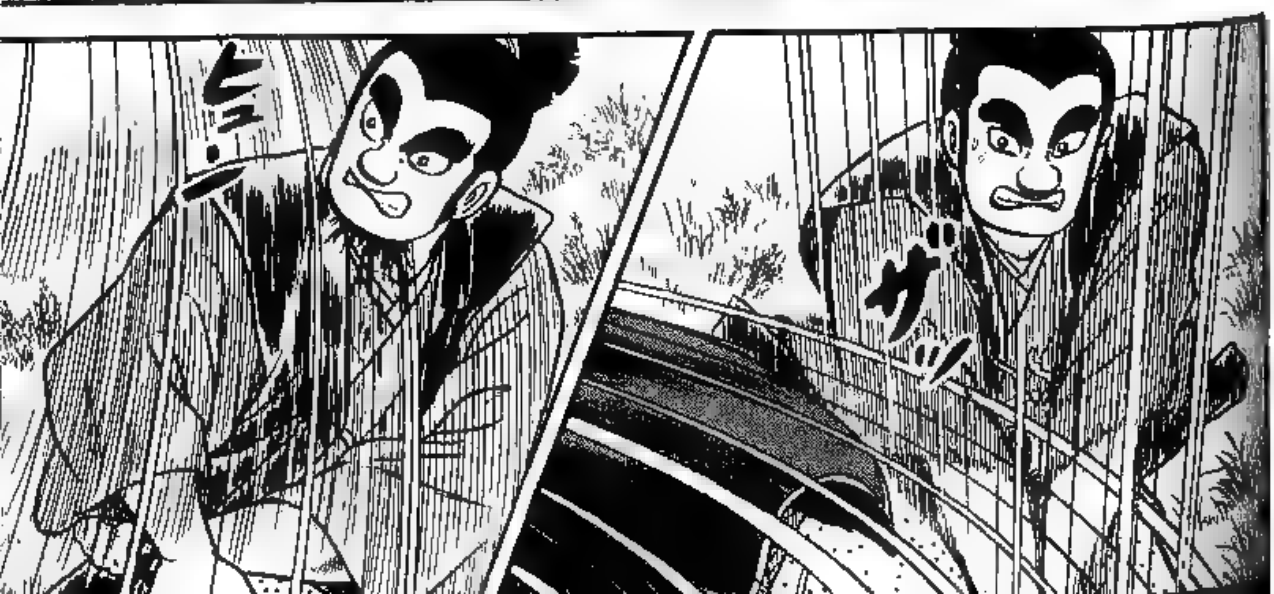
STEP ASIDE!!
IF YOU DON'T, I'LL KILL YOU ALL!!
IT'S THE GIRL I SAW AT TADAAKI'S DOJO...
THERE AREN'T ANY OTHERS SHOWING UP... PLEASE, REST ASSURED, THAT WOMAN IS ALONE!!

MOVE ASIDE!!


MOVE!!

FORGIVE MEEEEE !!
IT CAN'T BE HELPED !!
ALL THESE MEN POSITIONED AS A SHIELD FOR IEYASU...THEY'RE READY TO DIE FOR HIM...





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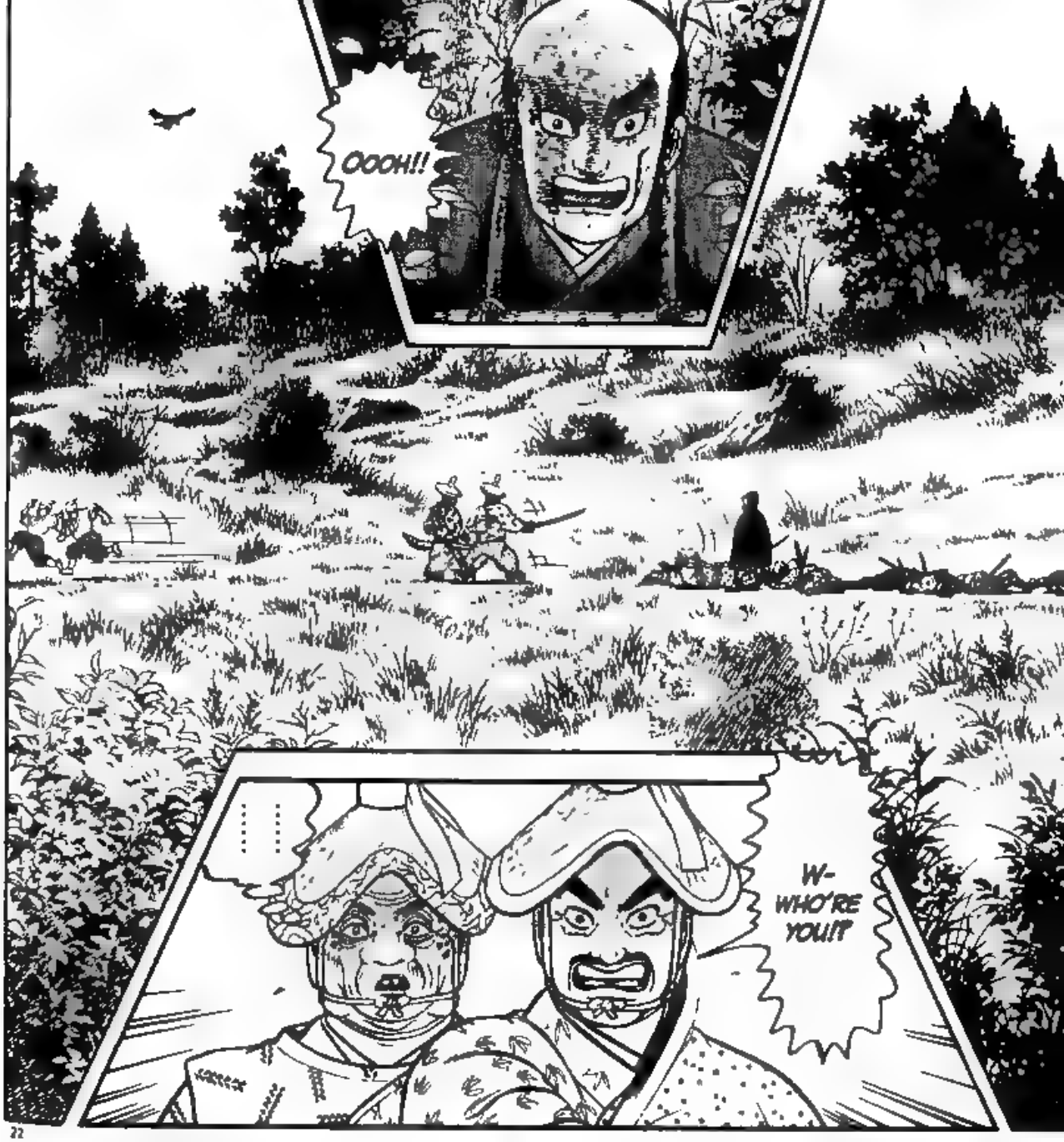

OOOH!!
W-WHO'RE YOU!?

THE MAN FROM THAT DAY...SO HE REALLY WAS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF IEYASU...
PANT
PANT
PANT

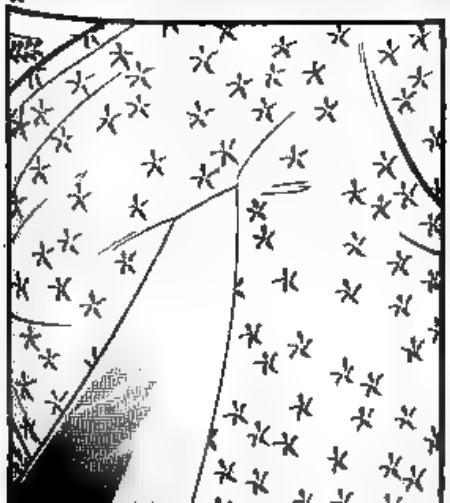
AH...
ドサッ

YES.
YOUR OBJECTIVE IS ONLY MY LIFE, RIGHT?
.....
UNDER-STOOD.
LET HIM LIVE!
MASAZUMI HERE IS A MAN THAT THIS COUNTRY STILL NEEDS.
YOU'RE AMAZINGLY SKILLED...
YOU'RE A GIRL, BUT...

THIS SWORD CONTIANS THE WISH OF KATO KIYOMASA-SAMA'S CLOSE ASSOCIATE, INOUE KANBEE-DONO.
.....
WHO...
.....
PRE-PARE YOUR-SELF!!
INOUE ....!?
KIYO-MASA !!

ARE YOU!?
チャッ
ズッ





A WARRIOR RAISED BY OBATA GESSAI.
THIS IS NOT HATRED, PLEASE THINK OF IT AS
YOU TAKING RESPONSI-BILITY!!
O... BA... TA!?
.....

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グ

UOAHHH!!

CHAPTER 5:
AS FENCERS

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PANT

RUN! RUN AWAY, AZUMI!!!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, YOU'LL GET AWAY FOR SURE!!

WAIT, AZUMI !!
WAIT !!
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT
AZUMI!!!!!

PANT
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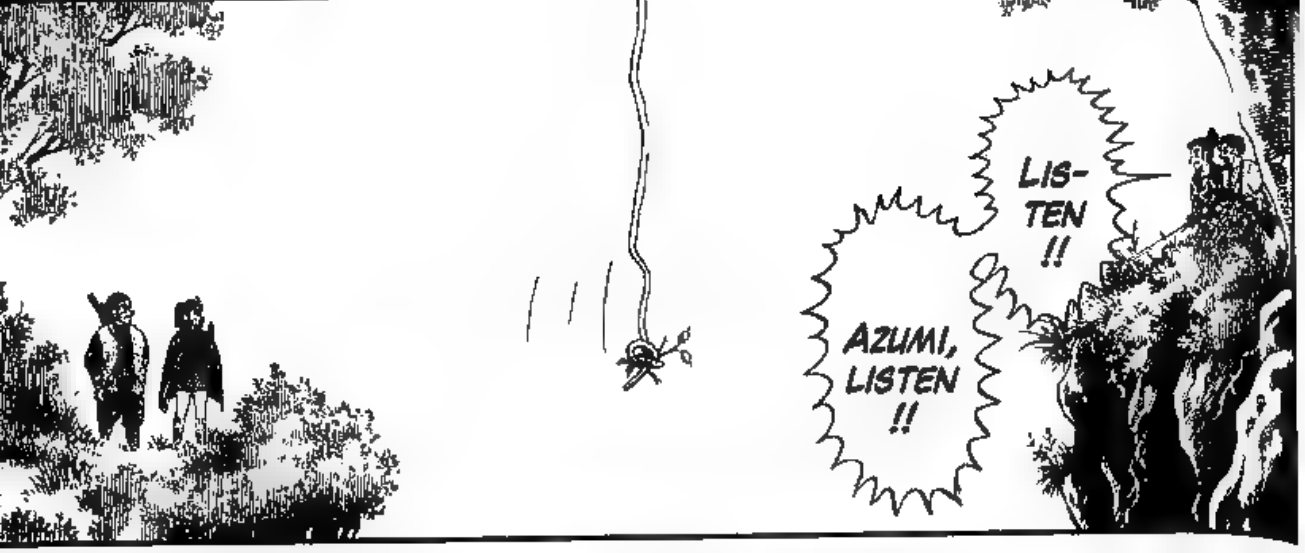
PANT


LIS-
TEN
!!
AZUMI,
LISTEN
!!

YOU'VE
TRICKED
US
NICELY!

IT'S OUR
LOSS!!
YOU
GOT
US!

BUT THIS
IS NOT
FAIR!!

IT'S
TRUE
THAT
WE'VE
UNDER-
ESTI-
MATED
YOU...

YOU FORESAW
THAT, WORRIED
ABOUT YOU FOR
BEING A GIRL,
WE WOULD
HAVE TRIED
TO PROTECT
YOU...
AND BY
THOSE
MEANS,
YOU
CAME TO
INFORM
US ON
PURPOSE
THAT YOU
WOULD
HAVE
ATTACKED
IEYASU-
SAMA,

THAT'S DIRTY!!
IT WAS A PLAN TO ENSNARE US IN YOUR TRAP!

IT'S NOT...LIKE YOU SAY!! I DIDN'T HAVE THAT INTENTION !!

FIGHT US!!

ARE YOU GOING TO RUN AWAY LIKE THAT!?
AZUMI!!!

WE ALREADY CAN'T AVOID COMMIT-TING SEPPUKU ...
EH!?
SEPPUKU!!! NO WAY...
WE DEPARTED IEYASU'S SIDE...WE WHO SHOULD HAVE PROTECTED HIM AND FELL STRUGGLING INTO A POND...
AT THE SAME TIME, IEYASU-SAMA WAS SLAIN AND WE LET THE ASSASSIN FLEE BEFORE OUR EYES...
9
THIS INEPTI-TUDE... THIS GRAVE BLUN-DER...
IS SUCH A SEVERE CRIME THAT EVEN COMMITTING SEPPUKU WON'T ATONE FOR IT!!
.....

THEY'RE RIGHT.
WELL ...
IS...IS THAT SO!?
I WANT TO HAVE A MATCH WITH YOU, AZUMI !!
SHIIITII
WE DIDN'T COMPREHEND THAT YOU HELD SUCH SKILL...
I LIVED UNTIL TODAY... TRAINING WITH THE SWORD ALL THE TIME...
I LIVED ...

I WAS CONCEITED TO HAVE REACHED A POSITION OF PRIDE IN MY SWORD, ABOVE ALL IN THE COUNTRY!

OBVIOUSLY IT WOULD BE FRUSTRATING, HAVING LINGERING REGRETS...
IF I WERE TO DIE COMMITTING SEPPUKU HERE AND NOW,
BUT, EVEN MORE THAN THAT

FIGHT US!!
I WANT TO FIGHT, AS A PERSON WHO LIVED BY THE SWORD...YOUR MASTERY OF THE BLADE THAT SLEW VETERAN GUARDS IN AN INSTANT!

WITHOUT FIGHTING LIKE THIS AND BEING TRICKED IN THAT WAY, DYING BY SEPPUKU...
AZUMI'S SWORD AND OUR SWORD !!
LET'S FIGHT !!
REGRET IN OUR HEARTS...
WOULD LEAVE US WITH SO MUCH
YOU SHOULD UNDER-STAND THIS FEEL-ING!!
AZUMI!! IF YOU TOO ARE A FENCER...
.....

WE CAN'T DIE LEAVING THINGS LIKE THIS...
COM-MITTING SEP-PUKU!!
LET'S FIIIIGHT !!
13
DON'T MIND THEM, AZUMI. LET'S GO.
AZUMI!! LET'S FIGHT!!
.....

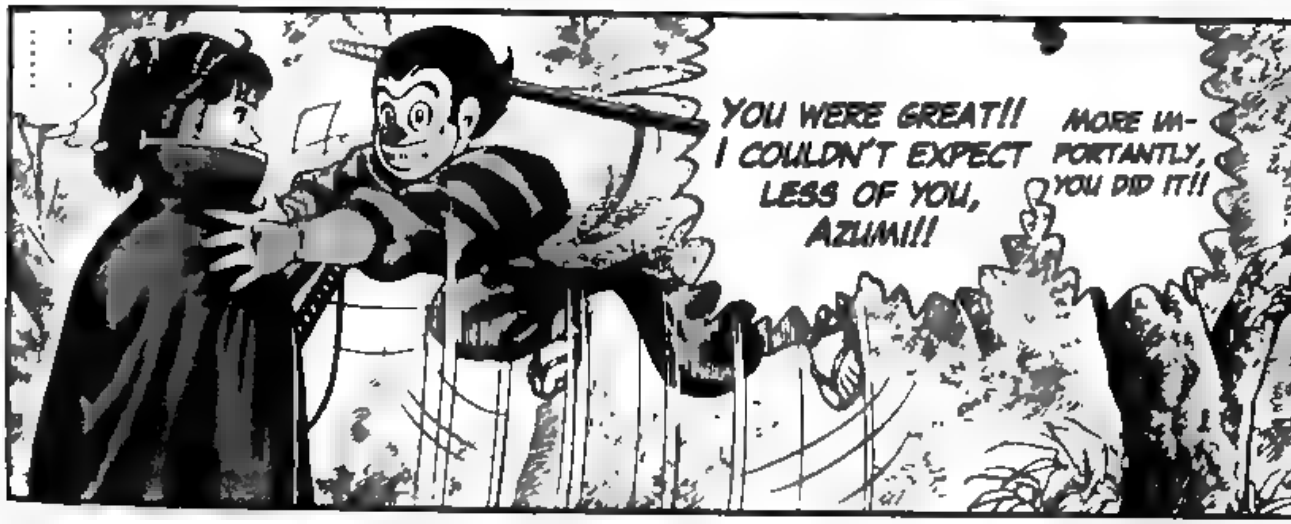
TODAY'S AT EIGHT AND HALF (2 PM),
BEFORE THAT, WE REQUEST A DUEL WITH YOU!!
SOON, OUR DESTINY WILL BE TO BE RESTRAINED AND TO SLIT OUR BELLIES...
WE'LL WAIT FOR YOU BEHIND THE RENSHOJI!!

IF YOU DON'T COME...
UNTIL THEN, WE'LL BREAK FROM OUR RESTRAINTS, ESCAPE AND WAIT THERE!!

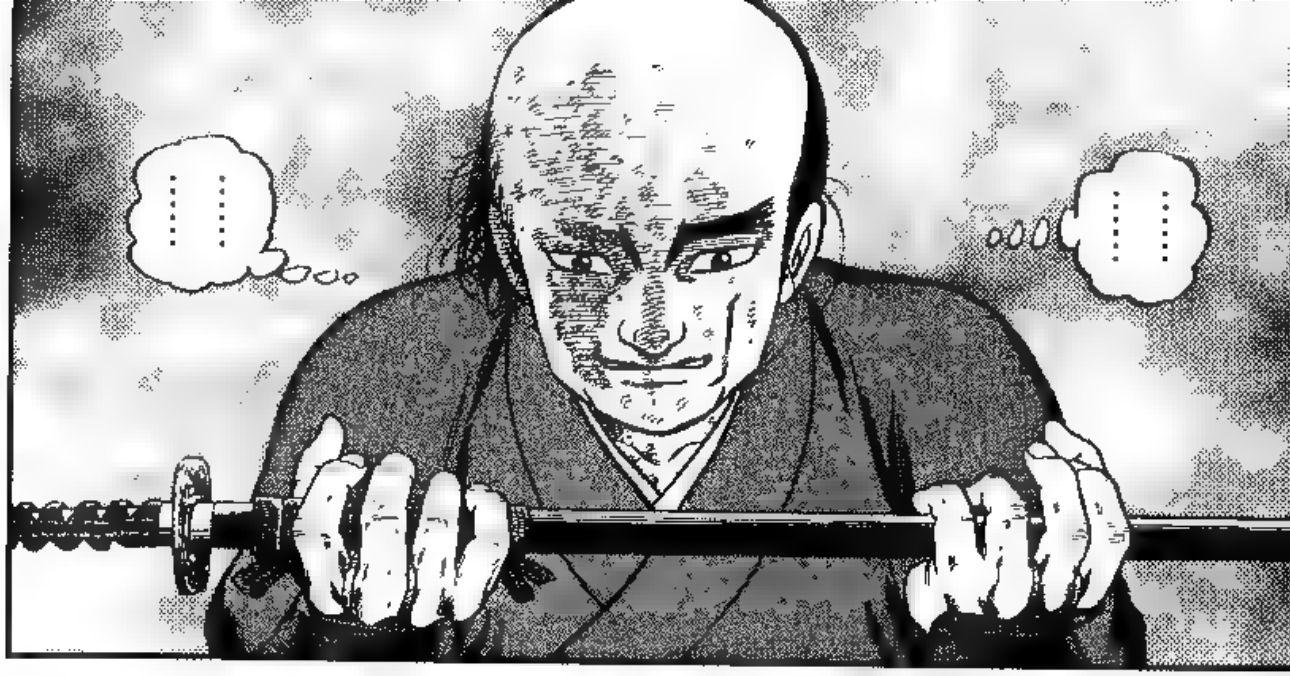
WE'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU, AZUMI!!
IF YOU DON'T COME, THEN BESIDES OUR SEVERE BLUNDER, WE'LL SUFFER THE STIGMA OF BEING COWARDS WHO FLED SEPPUKU!

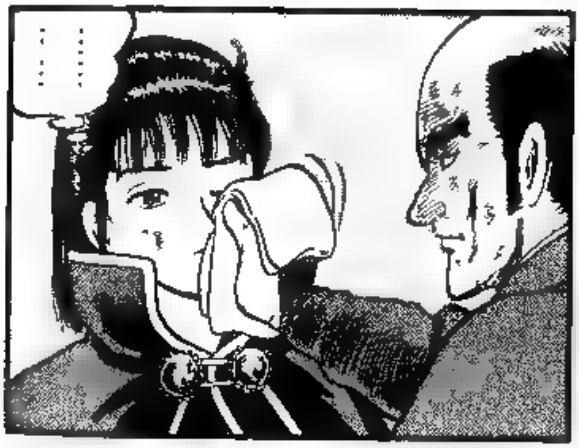
WE'LL BE WAITING, AZUMI!!
YOU MUSTN'T ACCEPT, AZUMI. COME!
WE'LL WAIT FOR YOU!! LET'S SETTLE THIS!!
COME, AZUMI...!

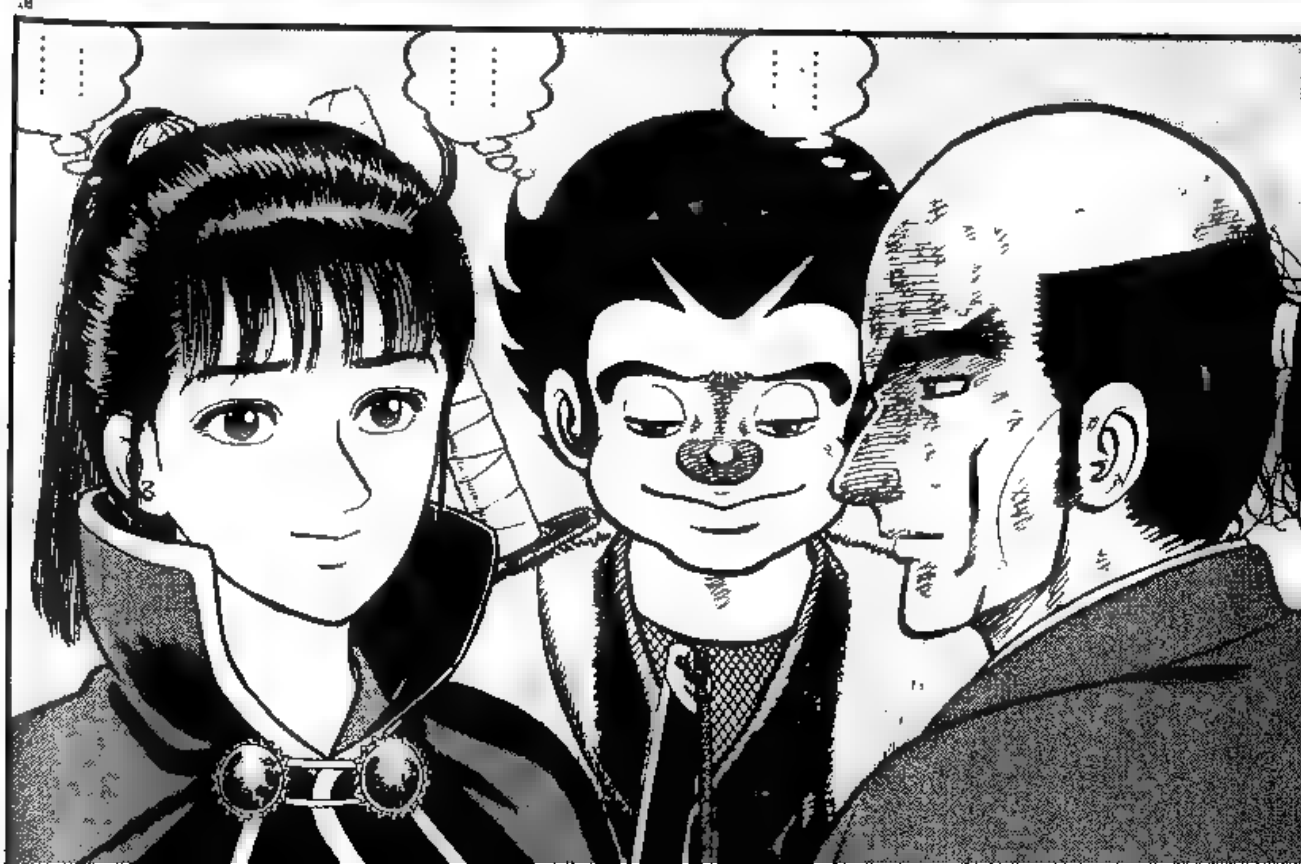
THIS IS THE RESULT OF HAVING BEEN IN A POSITION TO RISK YOUR LIVES...
DON'T MIND IT, AZUMI.
FOR REAL.


.....
YOU WERE GREAT!! I COULDN'T EXPECT LESS OF YOU, AZUMI!!
MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOU DID IT!!

YOU'VE BEEN BRIL-LIANT !!
I'VE CLEARLY SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES!!







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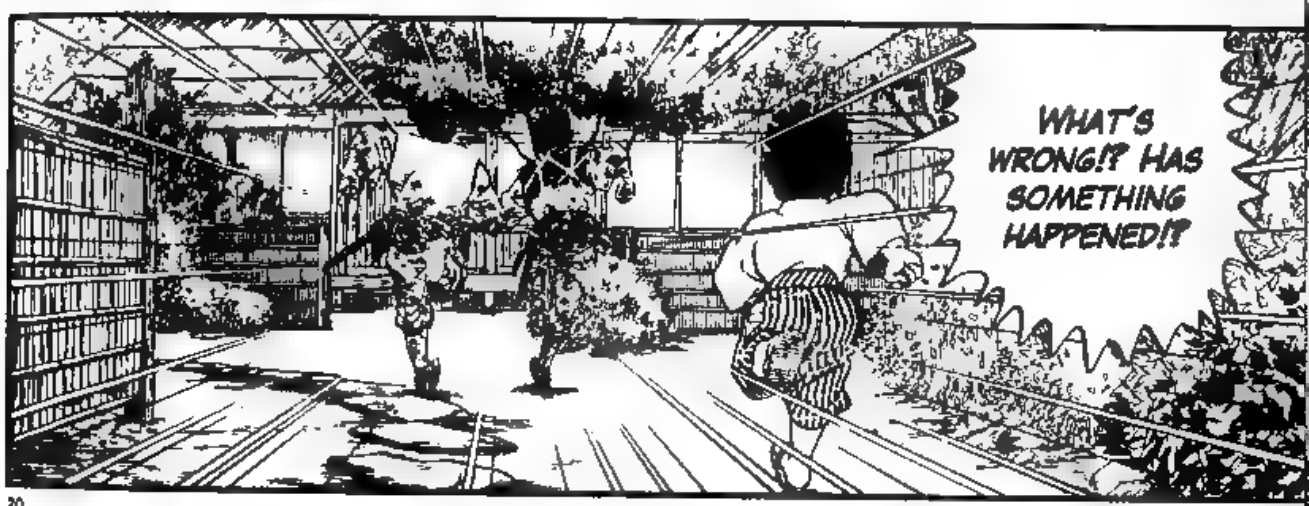
W-WHAT'S HAPPENED TO AZUMI-SAN?
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HER!?

HEY, WHAT ABOUT AZUMI-SAN!?


WHAT'S WRONG!? HAS SOMETHING HAPPENED!?

.....
.....
WE HAVE NO EXCUSES...

.....
.....
WHAT!!

BE-
CAUSE
...
LIKE WE RAN AWAY, TO ASK SENSEI TO FORGIVE US...
WE CAME HERE FIRST OF ALL,
WITHOUT REPORT-
ING,
WE SHOULD HAVE IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO THE CASTLE, BUT SINCE WE SHOULD HAVE WAITED THERE FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS AT HOUSE ARREST,
S-S-SEPPUKU!!!
!!
.....
WE CERTAINLY WILL HAVE TO COMMIT SEPPUKU FOR THIS BLUNDER...
EEEEEEH !?
WE WANT TO CROSS SWORDS WITH AZUMI!!
BEFORE THAT, AT ANY COSTS,
.....

.....
WE'LL AVOID HOUSE ARREST AND HEAD TO THE DUELING GROUND NOW!
WE SWEAR, WE SWEAR THAT THIS IS NOT TO AVOID SEPPUKU! WE'LL SETTLE THINGS WITH AZUMI AND ABSOLUTELY RETURN!
AZUMI-SAN!?
A D-DUEL WITH...

.....
.....

.....
RIN-TARO...
KYO-SUKE...
WE'RE TRULY SORRY ...
THIS TIME... WE CAUSED CONSIDER-ABLE TROU-BLES FOR YOU TOO, SENSEI...
WE CAN'T APOLOGIZE ENOUGH...
NOOOOii
NO...
W-WHY!? WHY!?
ブル ブル ブル ブル

ARE YOU THROWING AWAY...ALL OF THE GUNPOWDER!?... WHAT A WASTE...
IT'S USE-LESS !!
IT'S COMPLETELY USELESS NOW!!
WAH HA HA HA HA HA.

24

DUEL WITH US!!
WE'LL BE WAITING!!

CHAPTER 6:
THE FENCERS
AND THE
ASSASSIN

HAS AZUMI SAID THAT SHE'LL COME TO THE DUELING GROUND?
YOU SAID THAT SHE KILLED IEYASU... AND EVEN THOUGH SHE ESCAPED...
SHE SAID THAT SHE'LL COME TO DUEL WITH YOU
ON PUR-POSE !?

NO... ABOUT HER REPLY...
MAYBE SHE WON'T COME... HOWEVER,
HOWEVER, AS FENCERS, WAITING FOR SEPPUKU LIKE THIS IS TOO...
FAR TOO REGRET-TABLE!

PLEASE, FORGIVE US FOR THIS SELFISH-NESS...
AND FOR AVOIDING HOUSE ARREST SO WE CAN GO TO THE DUEL...
BEHIND THE RENSHŌJI AT EIGHT AND HALF (3 PM)..
WH-WHERE IS THE PLACE OF THE DUEL!?
NOOO ...
NO...
WE CAN'T PUT INTO WORDS...
UUUU

.....
.....
KINDNESS YOU SHOWED US UNTIL TODAY.
HOW DEEPLY GRATEFUL WE'RE FOR THE

WE CAUSED YOU SERIOUS TROUBLES WITH THIS SEVERE BLUNDER...
WE COULDN'T EVEN REPAY YOU AND...

.....
QUITE...
WE...ARE GOING TO DIE, SO IT'S...
KH...

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TEACHINGS AND ENCOUR-AGEMENTS UNTIL TODAY!
FOR THIS !!
WE'RE SORRY
PLEASE, FORGIVE US!

……
……
……
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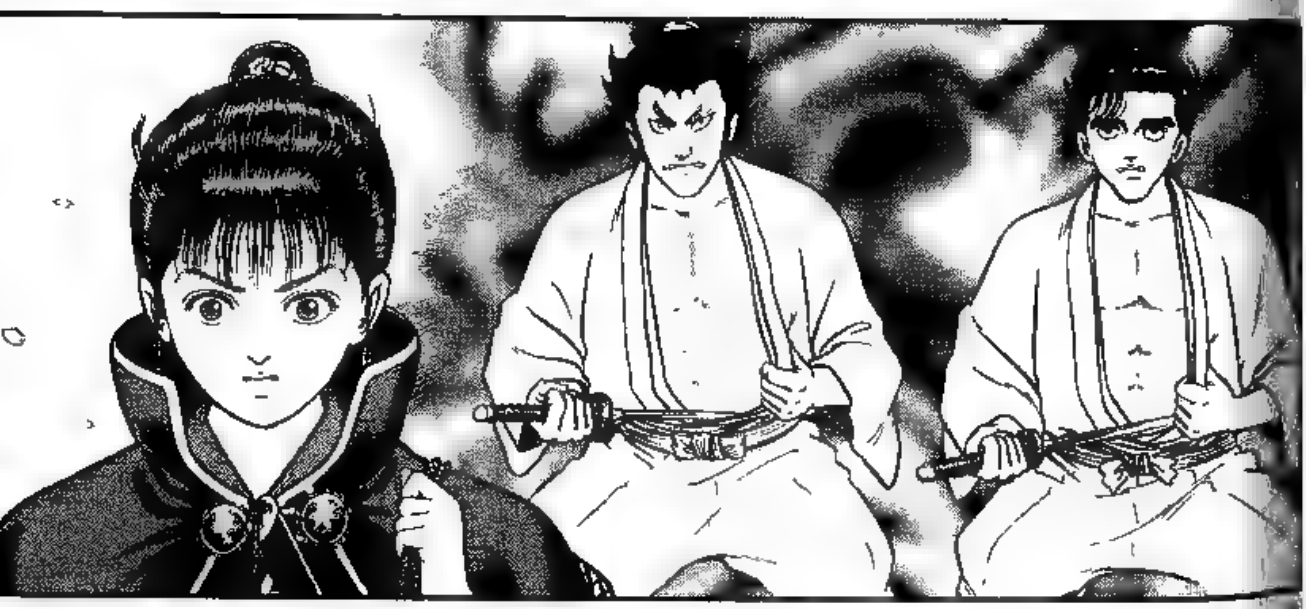
DUELING WITH AZUMI-SAN...
AND AFTER THAT, SEI-FUKU...
WHY!?
WHY!?
WHYYYY!?

I SEE.. IT'S THE SEASON OF THE CHERRY TREES IN FULL BLOOM..
HA HA HA HA..
SUCH A BEAUTIFUL VIEW...
I COULDN'T EVEN SEE...
HA HA HA...I DIDN'T FULLY NOTICE IT...

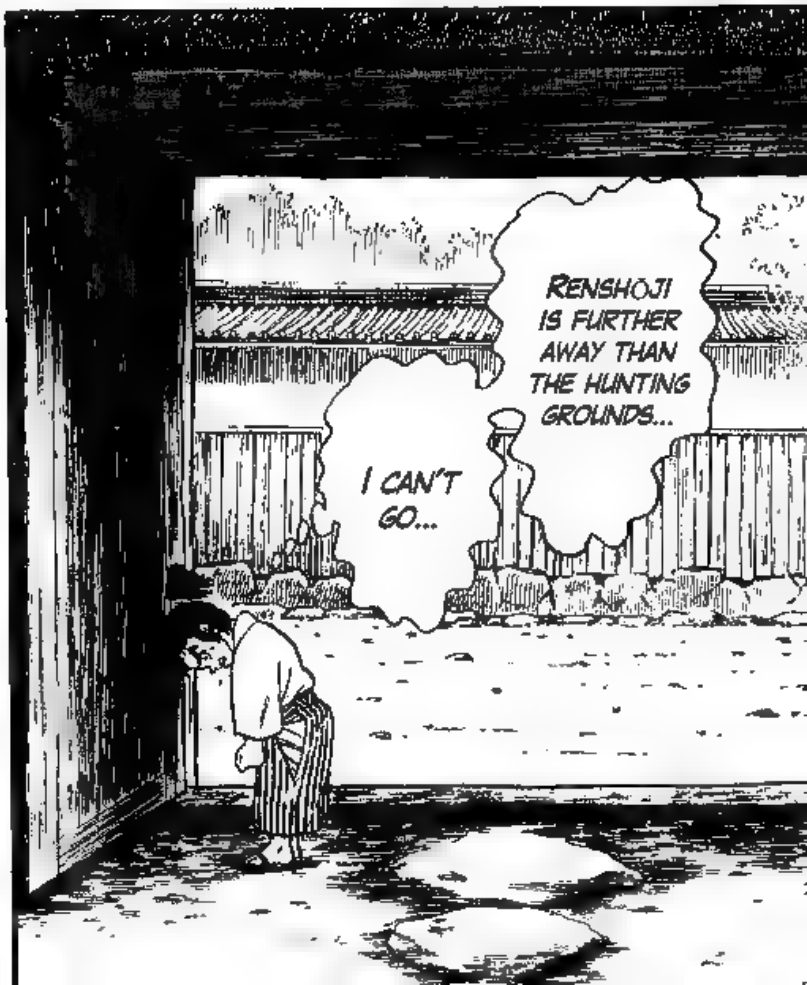
WE'LL BE WAITING, AZUMI!!
IF YOU DON'T COME, THEN BESIDES OUR SEVERE BLUNDER, WE'LL SUFFER THE STIGMA OF BEING COWARDS WHO FLED SEPPUKU!



ARE YOU ALL ALONE?
YOU LIVED PERFORM-ING YOUR ACROBAT-ICS?

COMMIT-TING SEP-PUKUUU!!
WE CAN'T DIE LIKE THIS,
LET'S FIGHT!!
IT SEEMS THAT SHE CAN'T GET AWAY FROM HER HEAD THOSE TWO...

……


RENSHOJI IS FURTHER AWAY THAN THE HUNTING GROUNDS...
I CAN'T GO...

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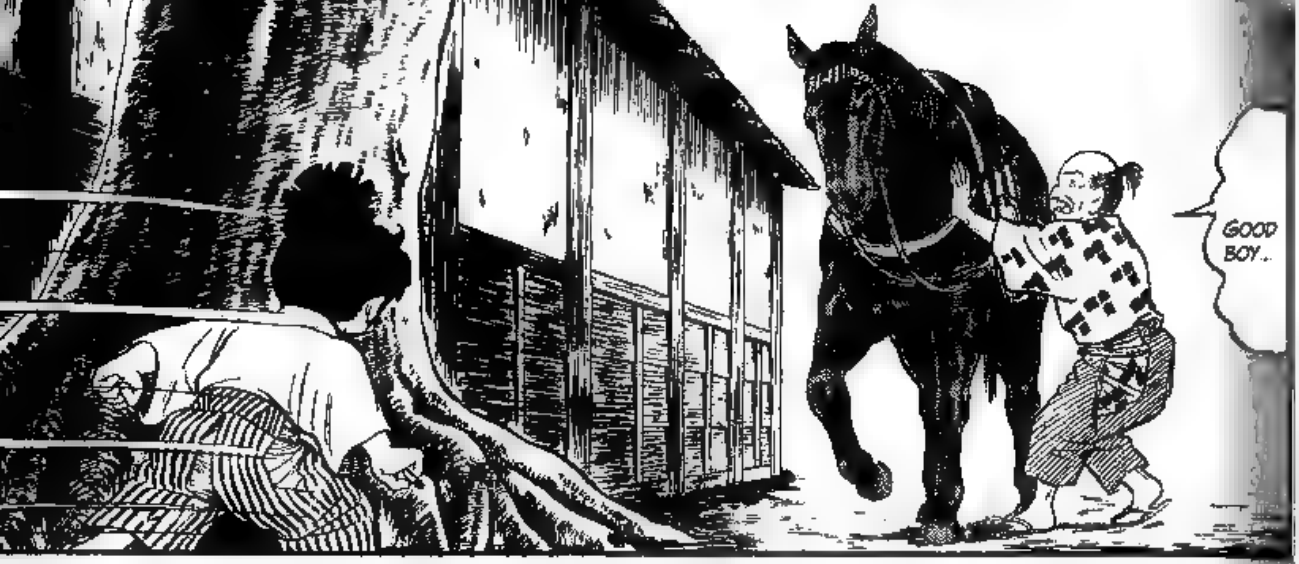
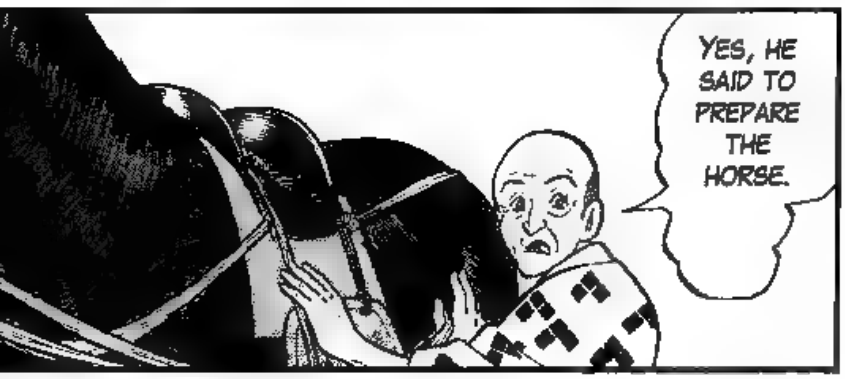
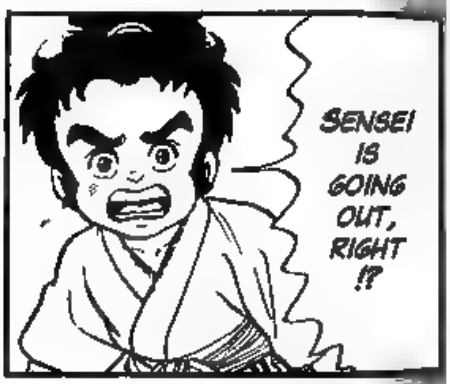

GOOD BOY..


YES, HE SAID TO PREPARE THE HORSE.


SENSEI IS GOING OUT, RIGHT !?

Y-YOU'RE GOING TO RENSHOJI, RIGHT!?

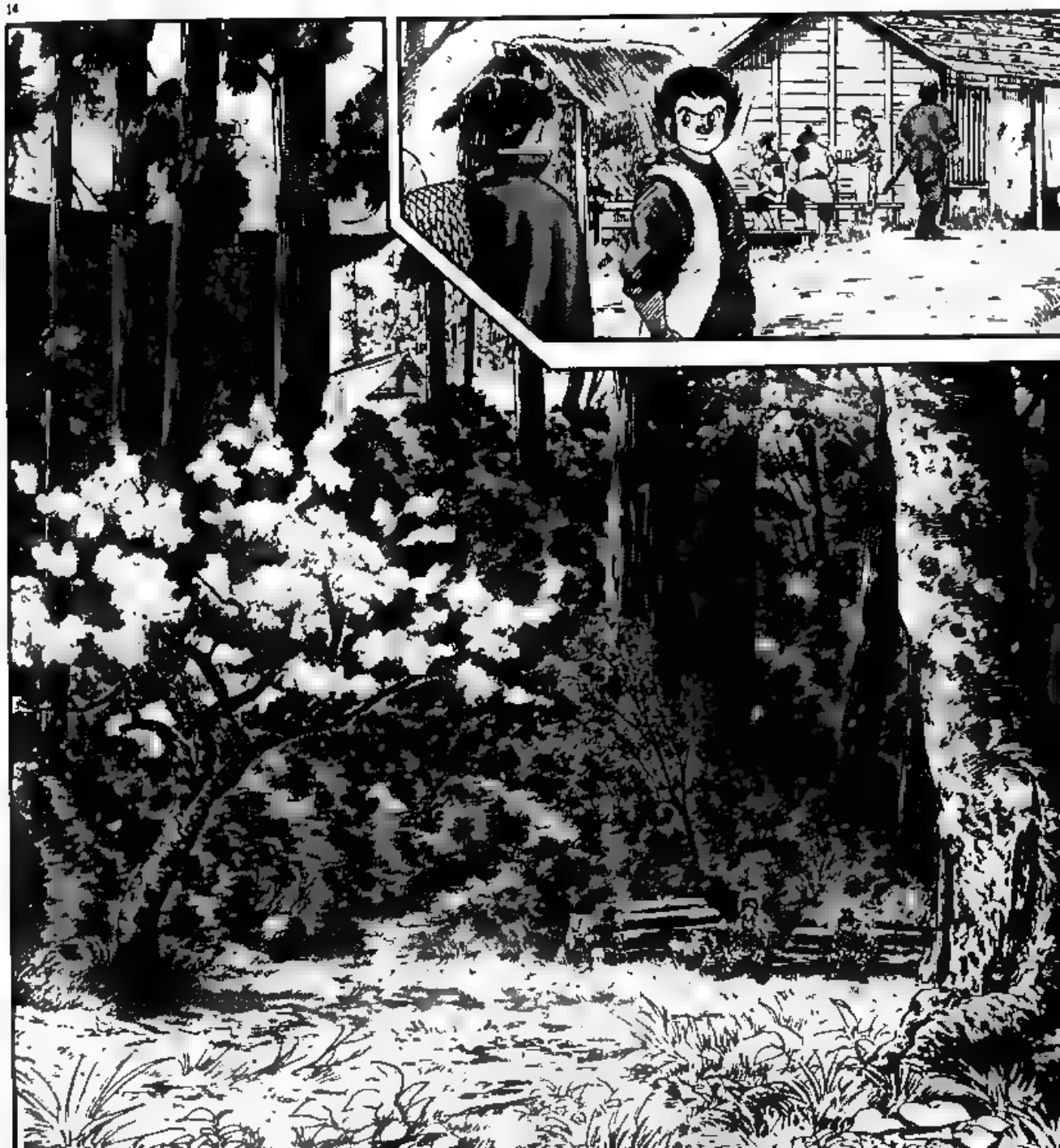
AH...
I...

ドカカカ!!
ドカカカ!!
.....

SOUNDS GOOD, I'M GOING TO BUY SOME.
LET'S ALSO DO SOME HANAMI WHILE EATING DANGO!

NO WAY...
NO, I'LL GO BUY THEM.
WAIT HERE.





KH ...!

THINK ABOUT IT!!
WHAT'RE WE DOING!?

SHOULD COME OF HER OWN ACCORD ONLY TO BE SLAIN BY US?
WHY AZUMI, WHO REALIZED EVERYTHING AS PLANNED,
SHE ACHIEVED HER GOAL AND SHE SPLENDIDLY FLED WITH PREPARED ESCAPE ROUTE!

WAH HA HA HAAAA!
THERE'S NO WAY SHE WOULD COME!!

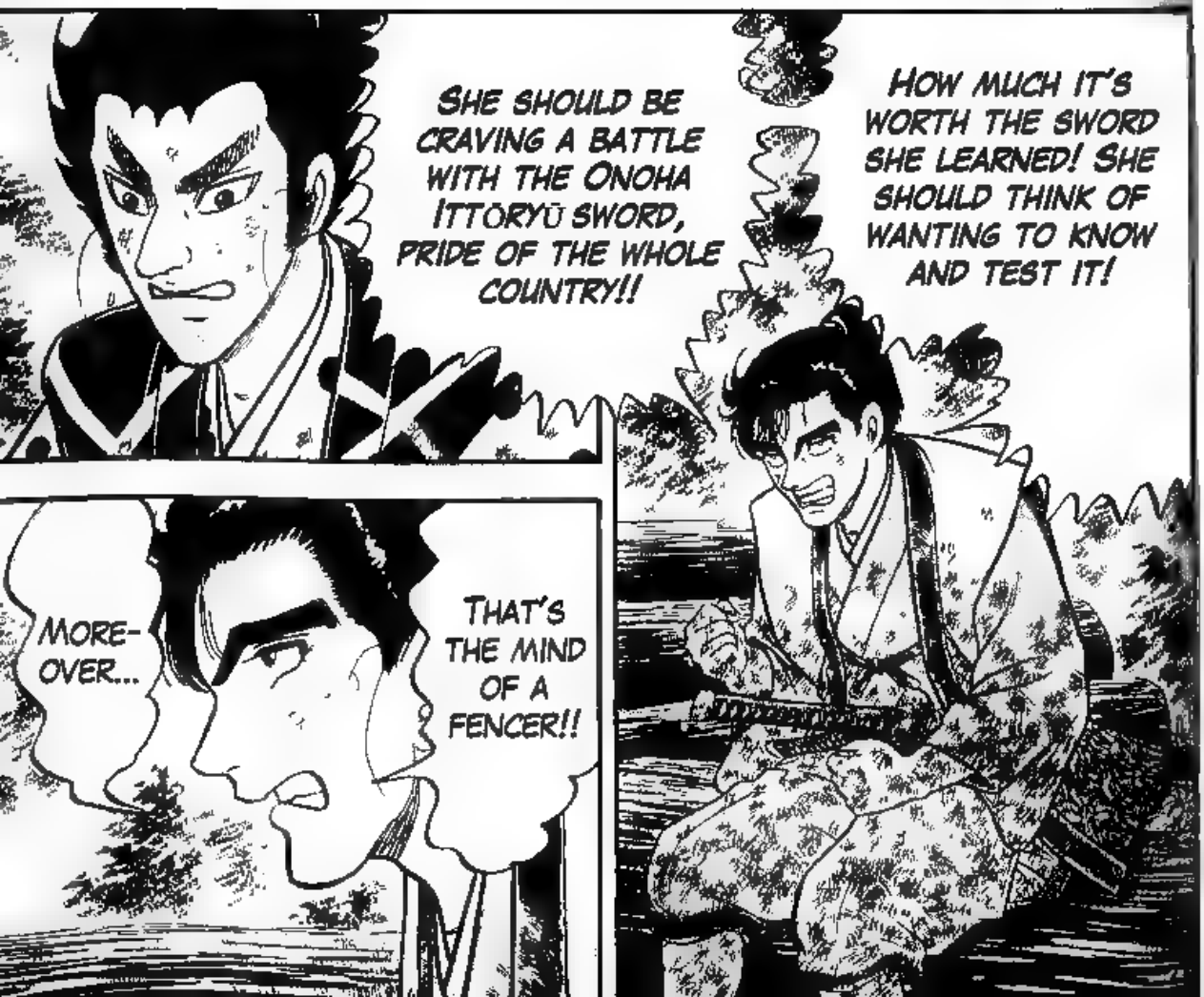
FUH HA HA
HA HA HAAA !!

AREN'T WE STUPID!?

AND DIS-GRACE-FUL!!

WE'RE SO UN-SIGHTLY ...
GOD-DAM-NIT!!

WITHOUT ERROR, AZUMI, LIKE US,
MUST HAVE BEEN RAISED TRAINING DAY AND NIGHT WITH THE SWORD FROM WHEN SHE WAS A CHILD!!
IF SHE'S A PERSON WHO LIVES BY THE SWORD,
SHE SHOULD WANT TO KNOW!!


HOW MUCH IT'S WORTH THE SWORD SHE LEARNED! SHE SHOULD THINK OF WANTING TO KNOW AND TEST IT!
SHE SHOULD BE CRAVING A BATTLE WITH THE ONOHA ITTŌRYŪ SWORD, PRIDE OF THE WHOLE COUNTRY!!
THAT'S THE MIND OF A FENCER!!
MORE-OVER...

AZUMI ISN'T A FENCER!!
IF SHE IS A FEN-CER!!
SHE SHOULD UNDERSTAND OUR REGRET!!

SHE'S AN ASSAS-SIN!!

SHE'S STILL WORRY-ING...
HYAH HA HA HA
HAH HA HA HA
SHE DOESN'T NEED TO GO TO THAT DUEL!!
WAH HA HA
HEEH HE HE
WAH-HA HA HA HA

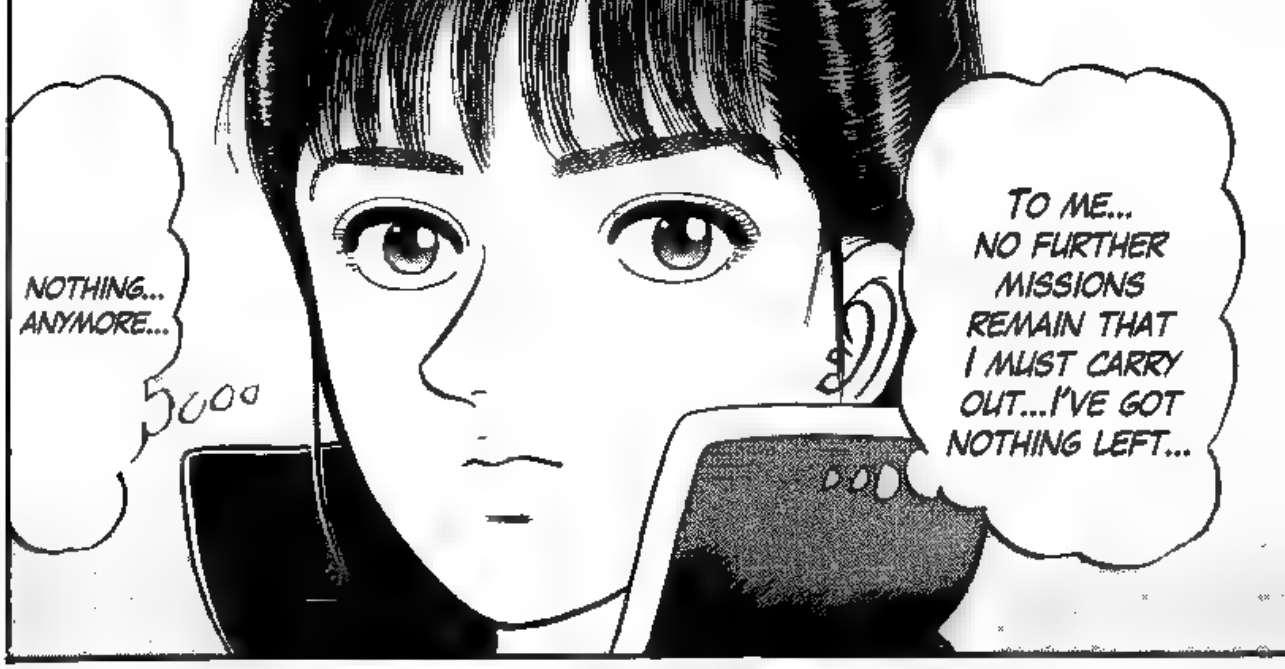
W-WHY!?
TO NOT GET FOUND OUT, LET'S WAIT HERE!

IF SHE KNEW I'M HERE TOO, SHE COULD RETREAT...
EVEN IF SHE COMES,

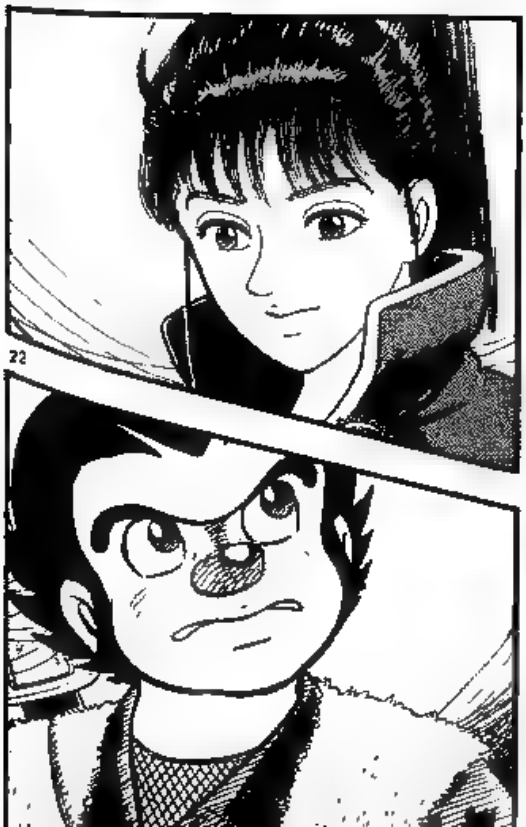
W-WILL AZUMI REALLY COME TO THE DUEL!?

SHE ESCAPED UNHARMED...SHE SHOULDN'T COME BACK TO RISK HER LIFE AGAIN ON PURPOSE...
IT'S UN-THINKABLE THAT SHE COMES...

AAAH, WHAT A SITUA-TION...
THERE'S NOTHING ELSE...THEY CAN DO NOW...
HOWEVER... HOWEVER, FROM KYOSUKE AND RINTARO'S POINT OF VIEW, THEY HAD NO OTHER OPTION THAN PROPOSING HER A DUEL AND WAIT LIKE THIS...
AH HA HA HA
AH HA HA!
HEE-HO!
GOOD! HA HA HA HA
.....


NOTHING... ANYMORE...
TO ME... NO FURTHER MISSIONS REMAIN THAT I MUST CARRY OUT...I'VE GOT NOTHING LEFT...

DON'T !!
DO YOU WANT TO GO!?



WHY DO YOU NEED TO GO?
STOP!!

.....
IDIOT...

S-SHE CAME!!

OOH !!

AZUMI !!

!!

AZUMI-SAN...

SHE... SHE CAME !!

AZUMI
...
SHE'S HERE!!

I TOO HAD ONE THING LEFT.
THE WORK OF THE SWORD GRANPA INSTILLED WITHIN US SINCE OUR YOUTH...
HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY, I WONDER...?
YOU GUYS WANT TO KNOW THAT TOO, RIGHT!?
I'M GONNA TEST THAT BY FIGHTING AGAINST THE SWORD OF THE ONOHA ITTORYŪ, REPUTED AS THE GREATEST IN THE NATION!
W-WHY... DID YOU COME BACK TO CROSS SWORDS WITH RINTARO-SAN AND KYOSUKE-SAN!?

AZUMI.
THANK YOU FOR COMING.
THANK YOU.
I'M GRATE-FUL...
IF I LOSE.. EVERYONE, PLEASE FORGIVE ME.
BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, I COULD COME WHERE YOU ALL ARE...
AZUMI... DOES IT MEAN THAT YOU HAVE SO MUCH CONFIDENCE IN YOUR SWORD!?

NO!!

STOP IT!!
HAVING PEOPLE I TREASURE KILLING ONE ANOTHER IS...

30

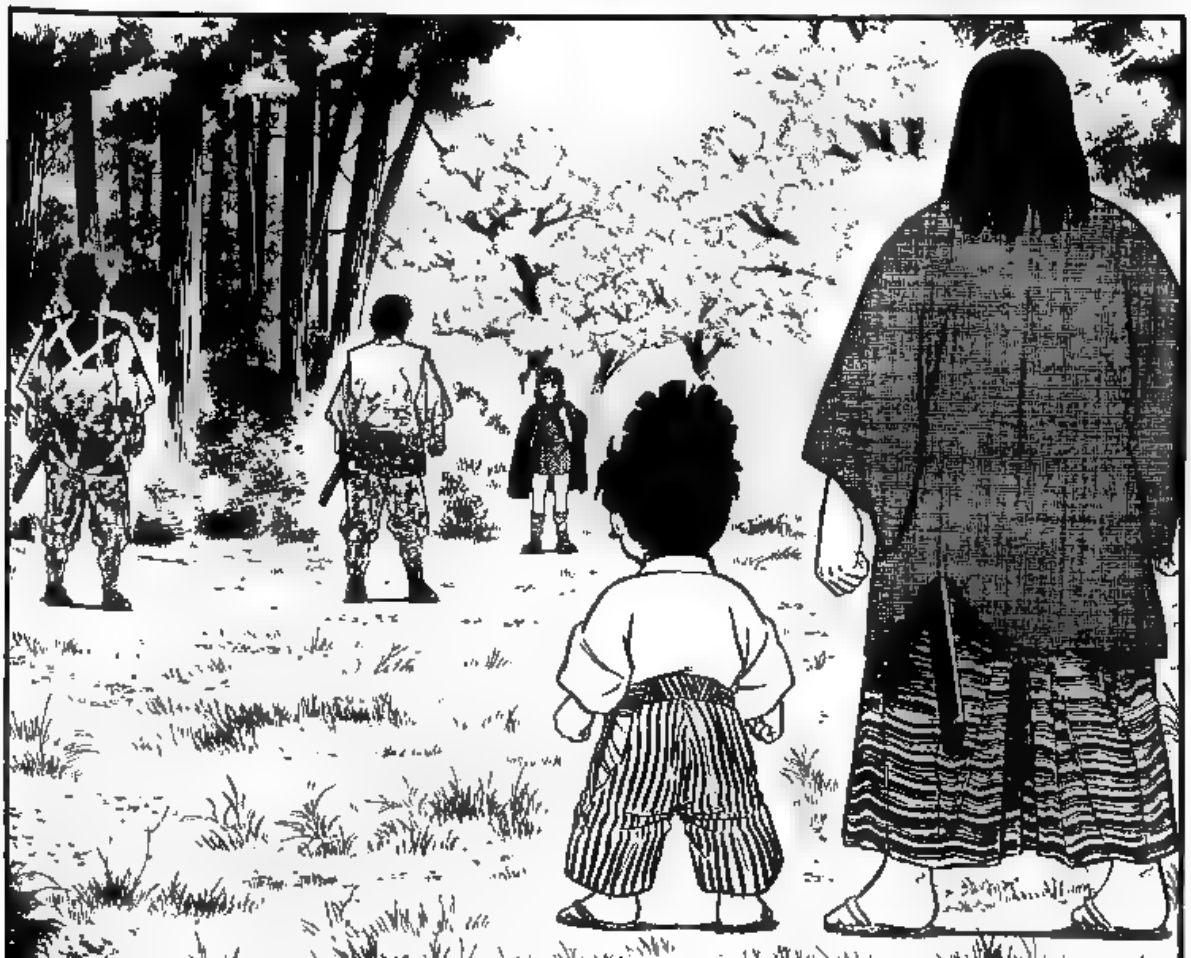
IS KOHYOTA WATCHING ?

CHAPTER 7:
THE DUEL AT
RENSHŌJI

TADAAKI-
SENSEI
TOO...

SEN-
SEI...

SEN-
SEI...



S-
STOP
...
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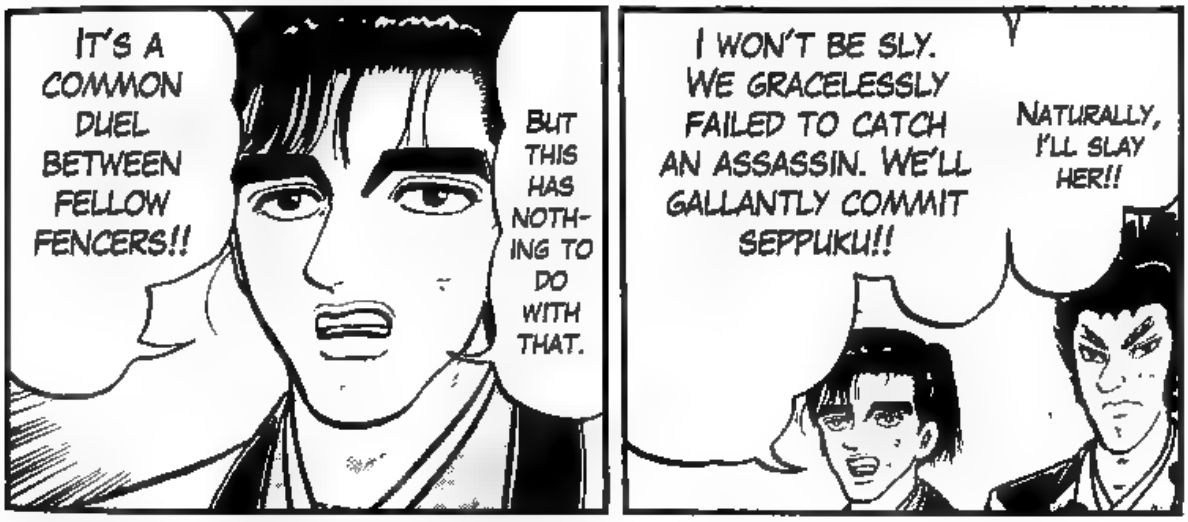
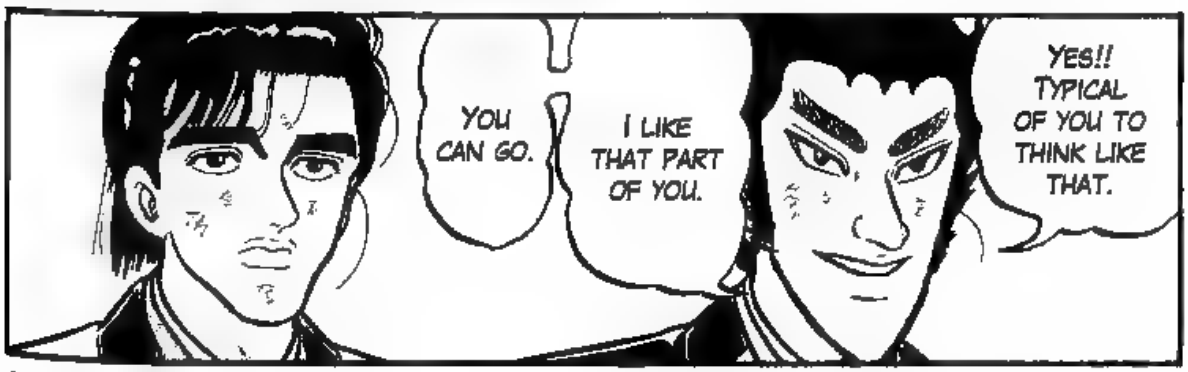
AZUMI!!
YOUR RESOLVE IS MAGNIFICENT!! THANK YOU FOR RETURNING!! I, ONO TADAAKI, WILL WITNESS THIS DUEL WITH MY OWN EYES!!

.....
.....
.....

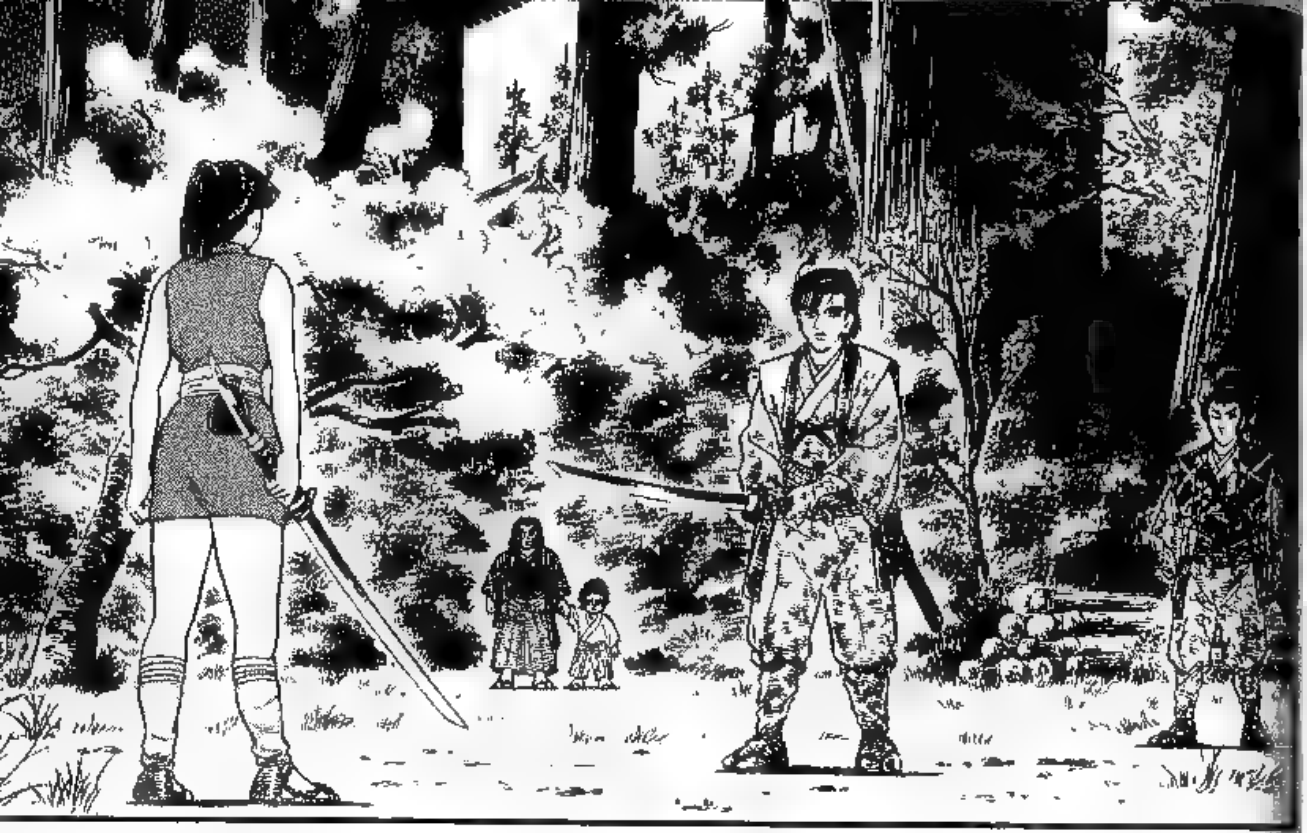
I'LL BE YOUR OPPO-NENT!
WHAT AN IM-POSING CALM SHE HAS...
IN A DUEL WITH REAL BLADES...
AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE...HOW MUCH FIGHTING HAVE YOU ENDURED ...!?
AZUMI ...

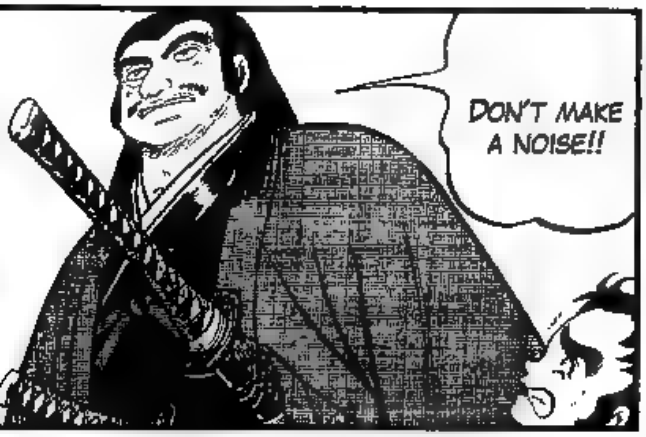
ARE YOU PLANNING TO SLAY HER...
OR TO WOUND, ARREST AND PRESENT HER AS THE ASSASSIN WHO KILLED IEYASU-SAMA!?
RINTARO, LEAVE THE FIGHT TO ME.


BUT THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT.
IT'S A COMMON DUEL BETWEEN FELLOW FENCERS!!
NATURALLY, I'LL SLAY HER!!
I WON'T BE SLY. WE GRACELESSLY FAILED TO CATCH AN ASSASSIN. WE'LL GALLANTLY COMMIT SEPPUKU!!


YES!! TYPICAL OF YOU TO THINK LIKE THAT.
I LIKE THAT PART OF YOU.
YOU CAN GO.

AZUMI,
I'LL BE YOUR OPPONENT!!




DON'T MAKE A NOISE!!

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S... STOP ...

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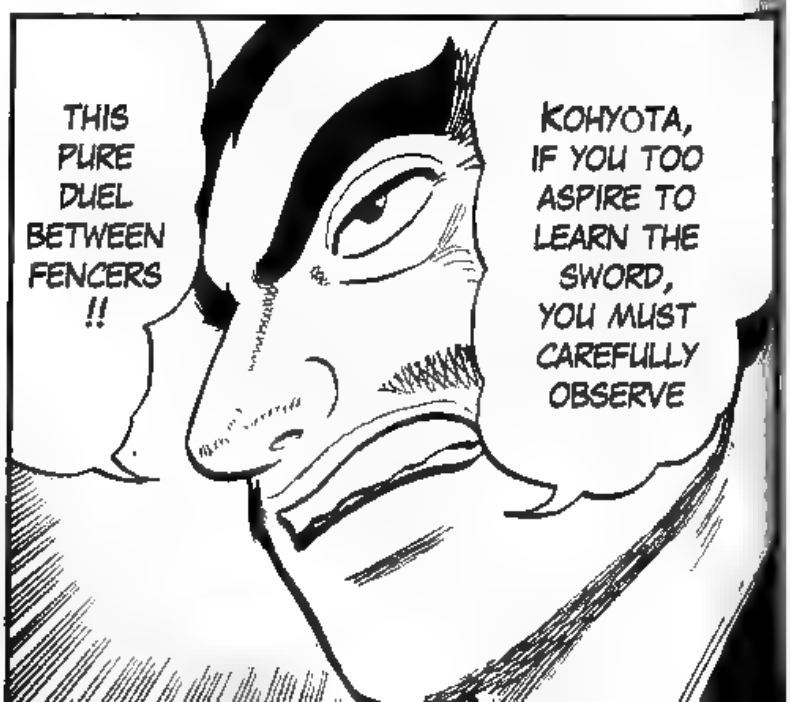
KOHYOTA, IF YOU TOO ASPIRE TO LEARN THE SWORD, YOU MUST CAREFULLY OBSERVE
THIS PURE DUEL BETWEEN FENCERS !!

EVERY-ONE...
ARE YOU WATCH-ING!?
HOW MUCH IS WORTH IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY THE BUJUTSU ETCHED IN OUR BODIES
THAT GRAMPA TAUGHT US SINCE WE WERE SMALL CHILDREN...?
NOW, I'M GOING TO FIGHT WITH ONE OF THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY,
A GENIUS FENCER FROM THE ONOHA ITTORYU.

B

I'LL FIGHT WITH ALL MY MIGHT !!
WILL YOU BE HAPPY IF I WIN!?
HOWEVER, IF I LOSE, FORGIVE ME.
ON THE OTHER HAND, I ALSO WILL COME TO WHERE YOU ALL ARE...
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I MUST KILL HER..
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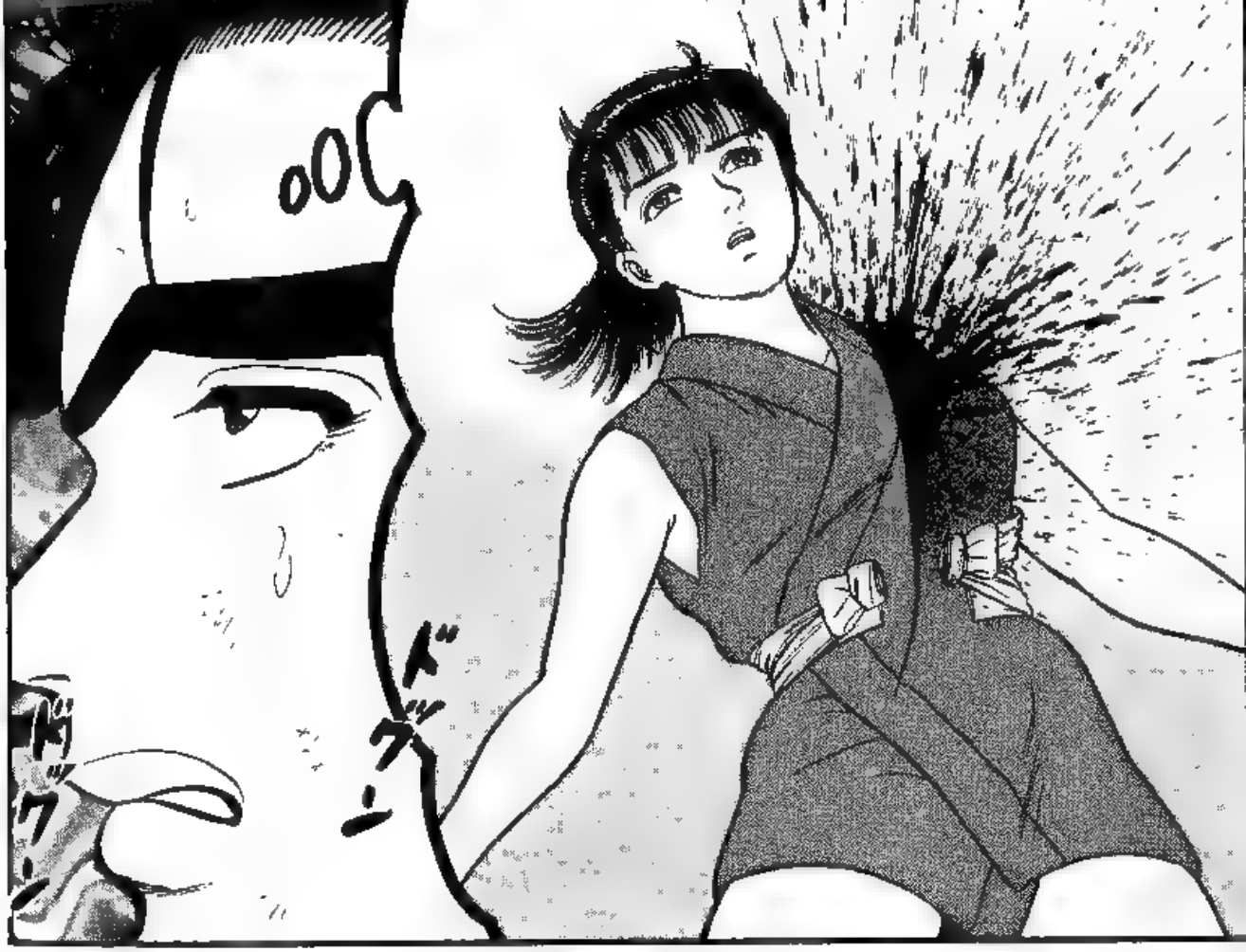
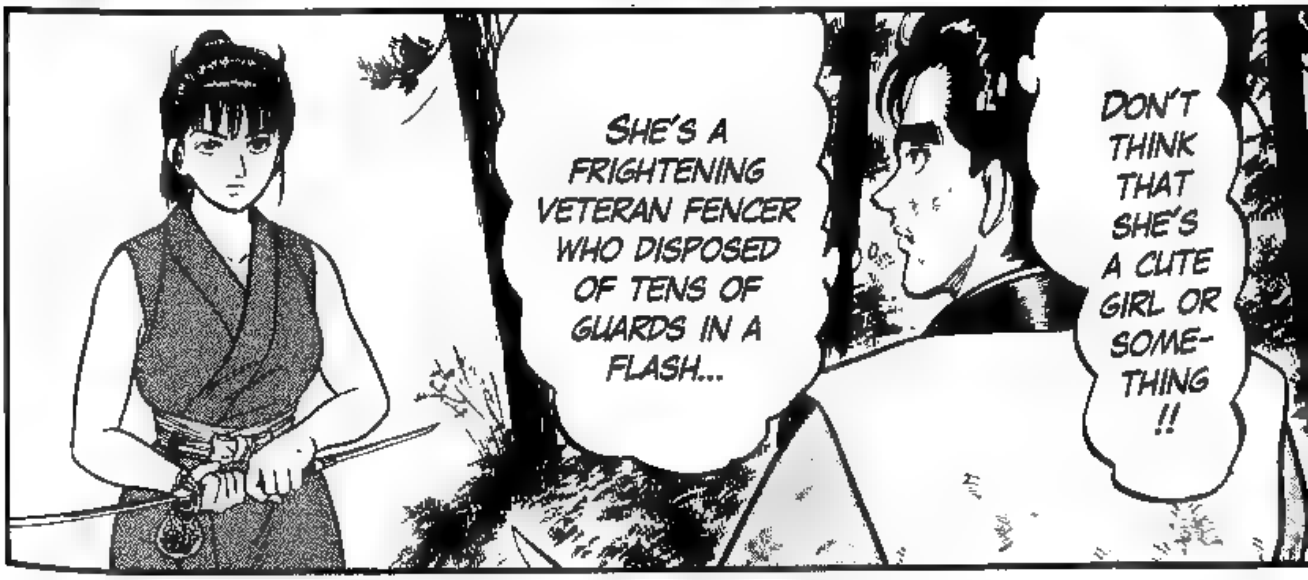
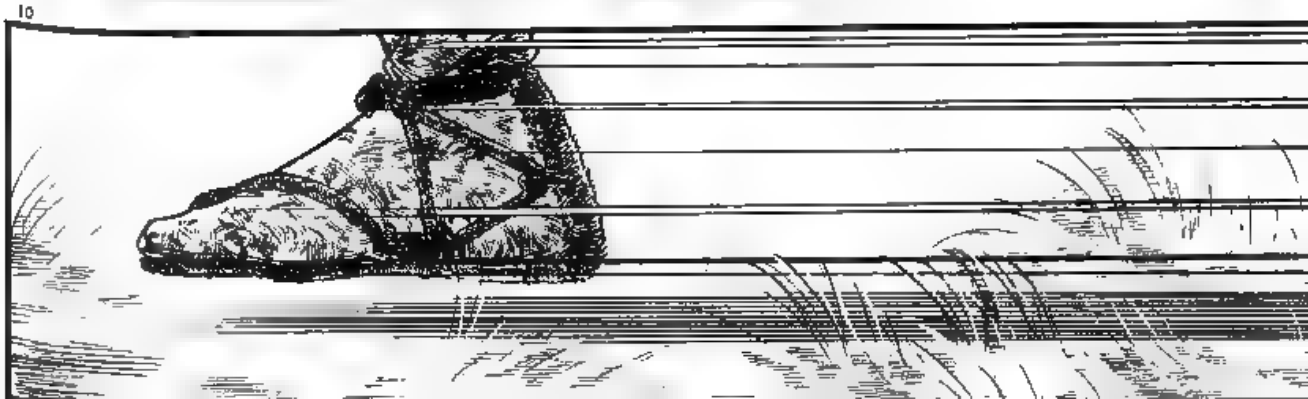
I'LL KILL HER!!




SHE'S A FRIGHTENING VETERAN FENCER WHO DISPOSED OF TENS OF GUARDS IN A FLASH...
DON'T THINK THAT SHE'S A CUTE GIRL OR SOME-THING !!





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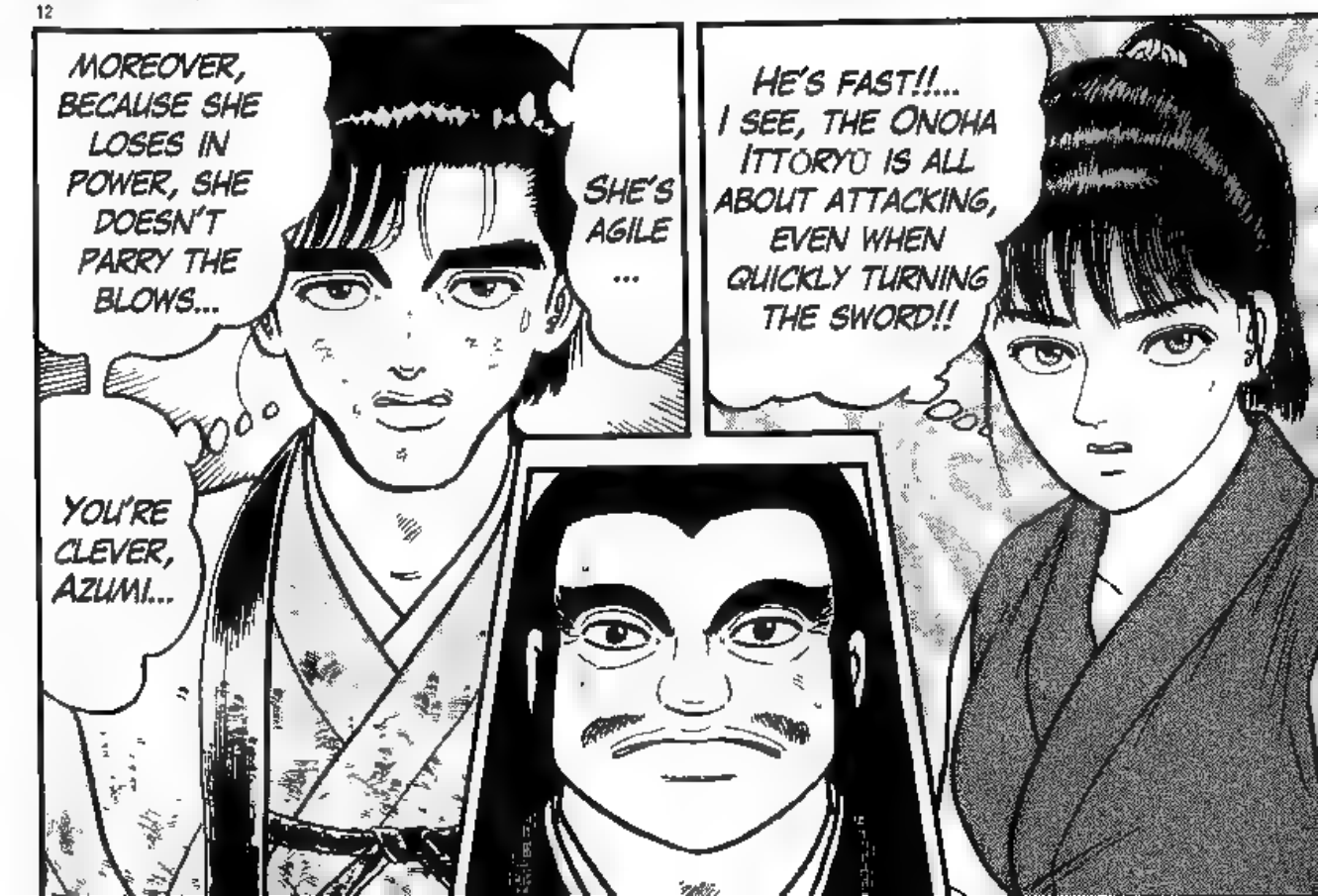
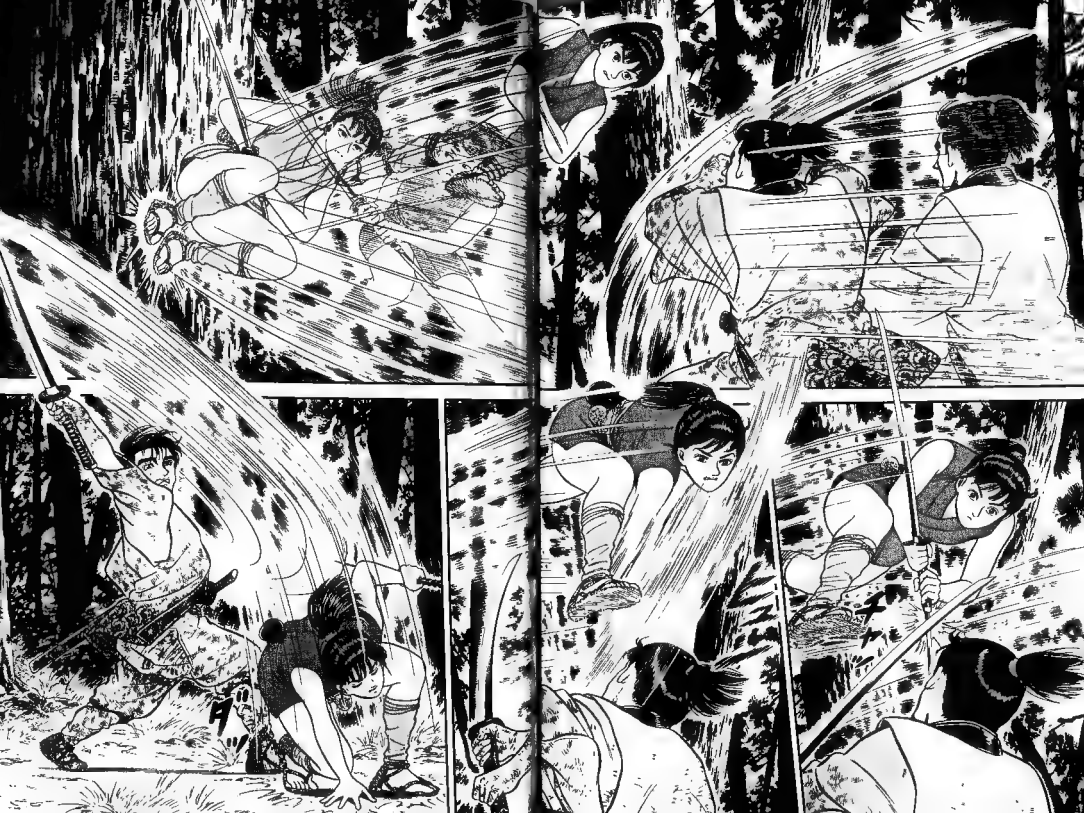

MOREOVER, BECAUSE SHE LOSES IN POWER, SHE DOESN'T PARRY THE BLOWS...
SHE'S AGILE ...
HE'S FAST!!... I SEE, THE ONOHA ITTORYŪ IS ALL ABOUT ATTACKING, EVEN WHEN QUICKLY TURNING THE SWORD!!
YOU'RE CLEVER, AZUMI...

THERE'S A TREE BEHIND YOU, YOU CAN'T STEP BACK ANYMORE!
BUT, I'VE ALREADY FIGURED HOW YOU DODGE!!
YOU CAN'T STEP BACK ANYMORE!



!!
!!
AZUMI!!!!!
OOOH !!
I'LL BE YOUR OPPO-NENT!!

CALM DOWN !!
RIN-TARO, DON'T BE IMPA-TIENT !!

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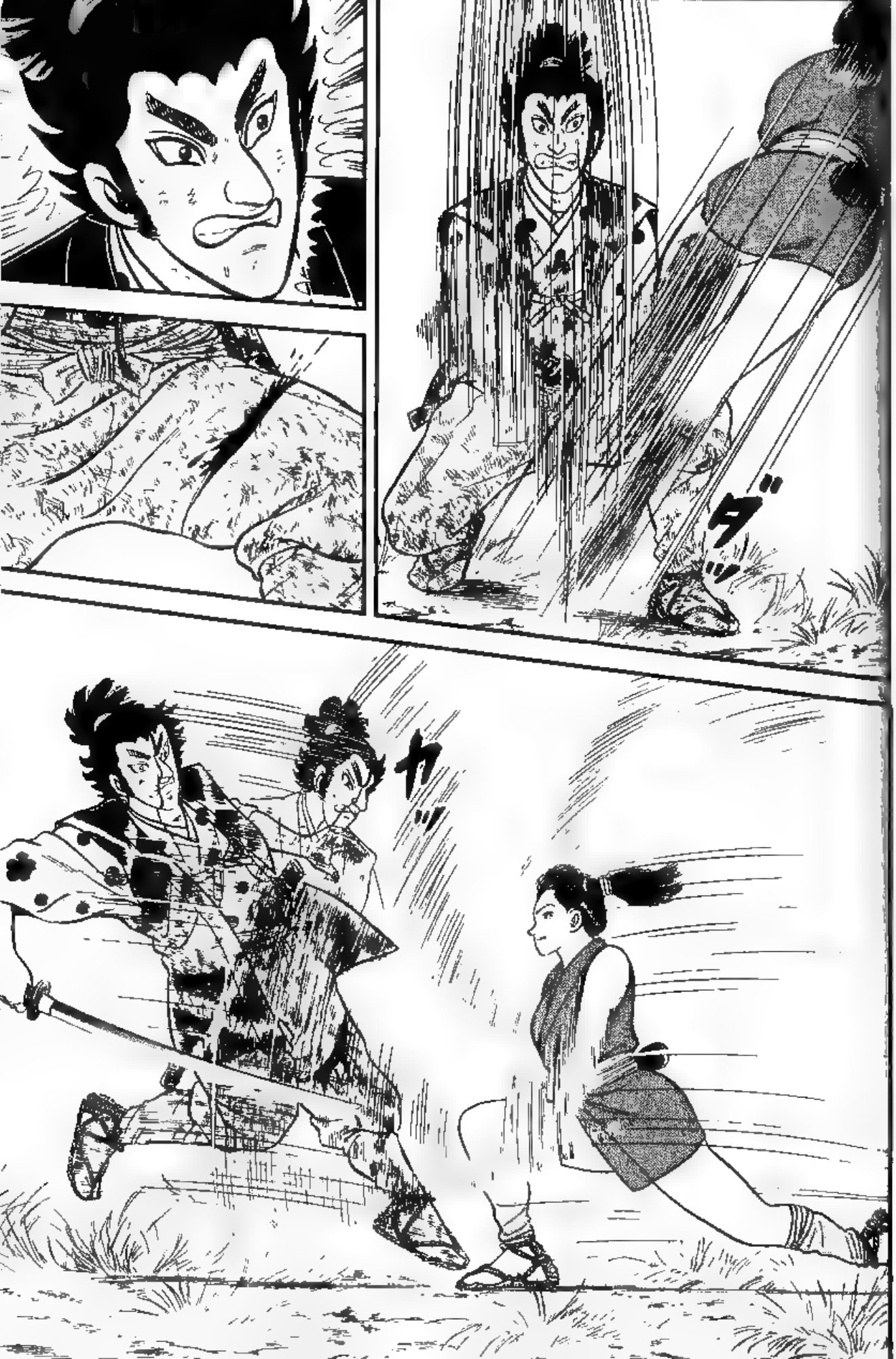
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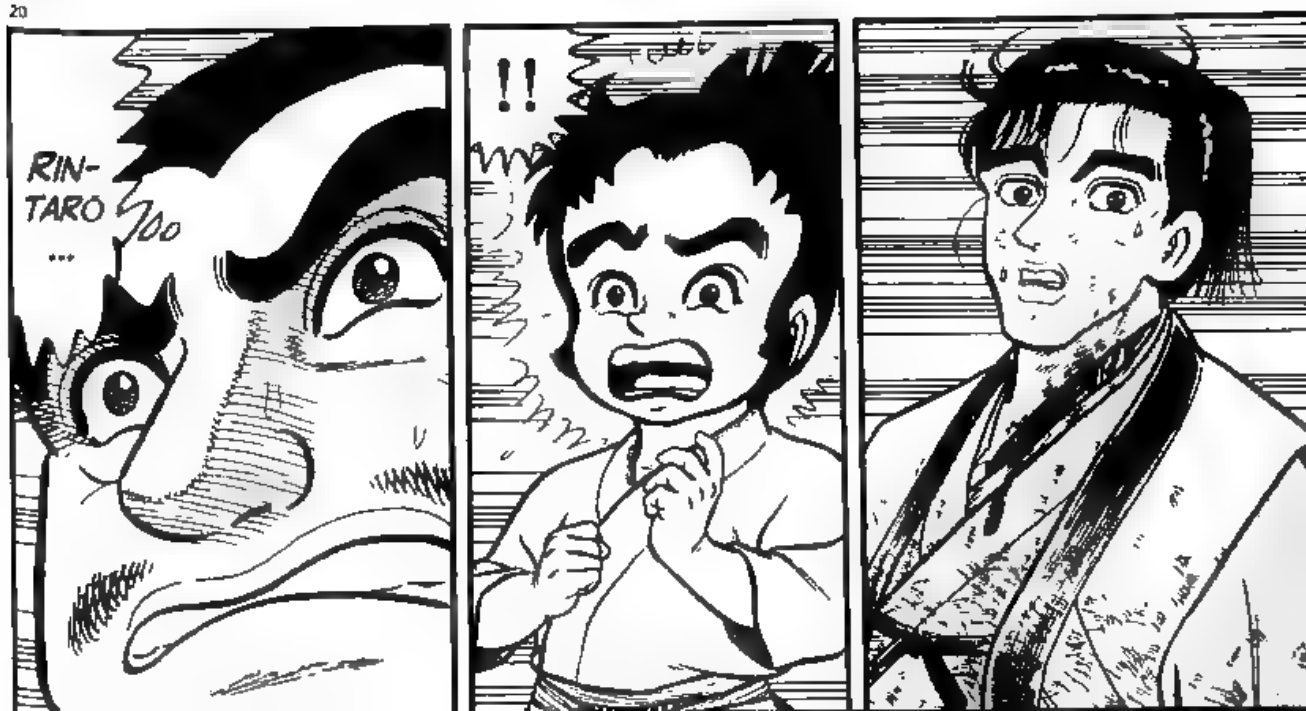

RIN-
TARO
...
!!

PANT
PANT
PANT

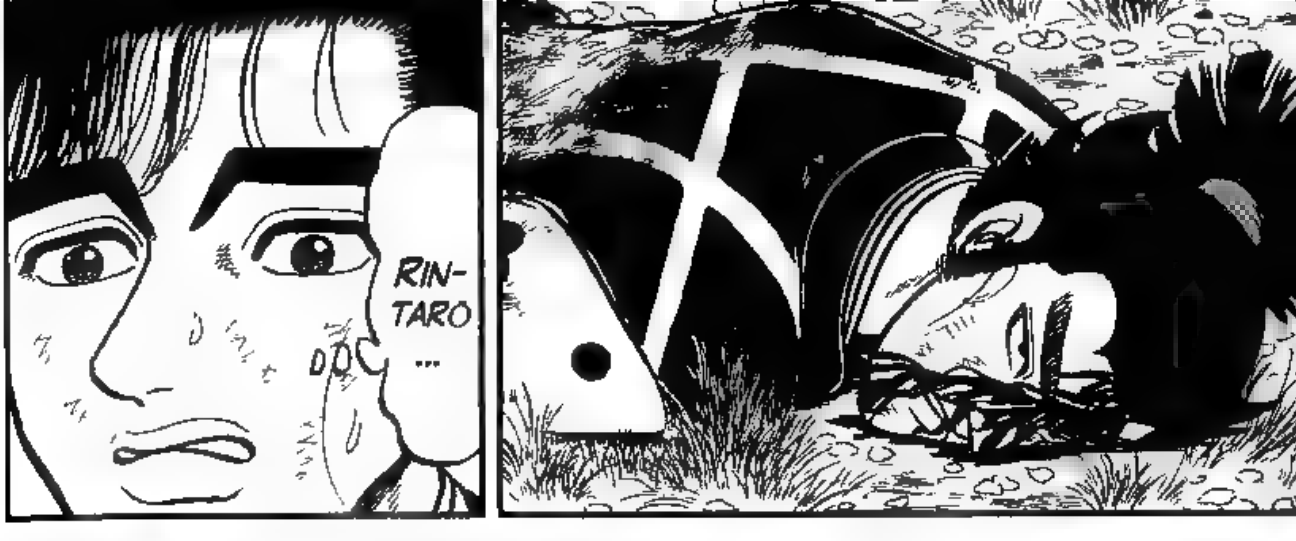
.....

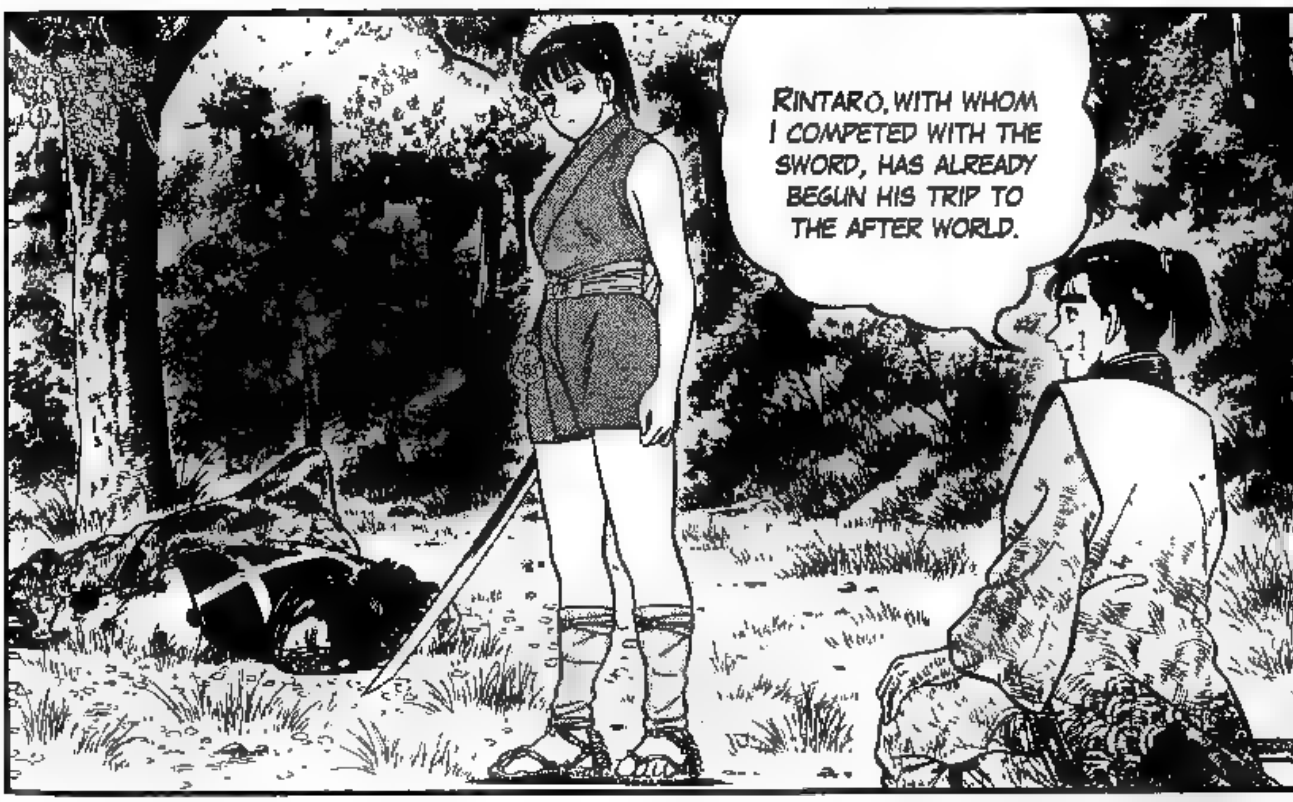
.....
PANT
PANT
TELL ME...HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE WAS A TREE THERE, WITHOUT LOOKING BEHIND YOURSELF?

.....
YOU FELT IT WITH YOUR FIVE SENSES ...!?
I FELT IT WITH MY FIVE SENES...
MAYBE... BECAUSE I'VE ALWAYS BEEN TRAINED AND RAISED IN THE DEEP MOUNTAINS AND IN A VALLEY,

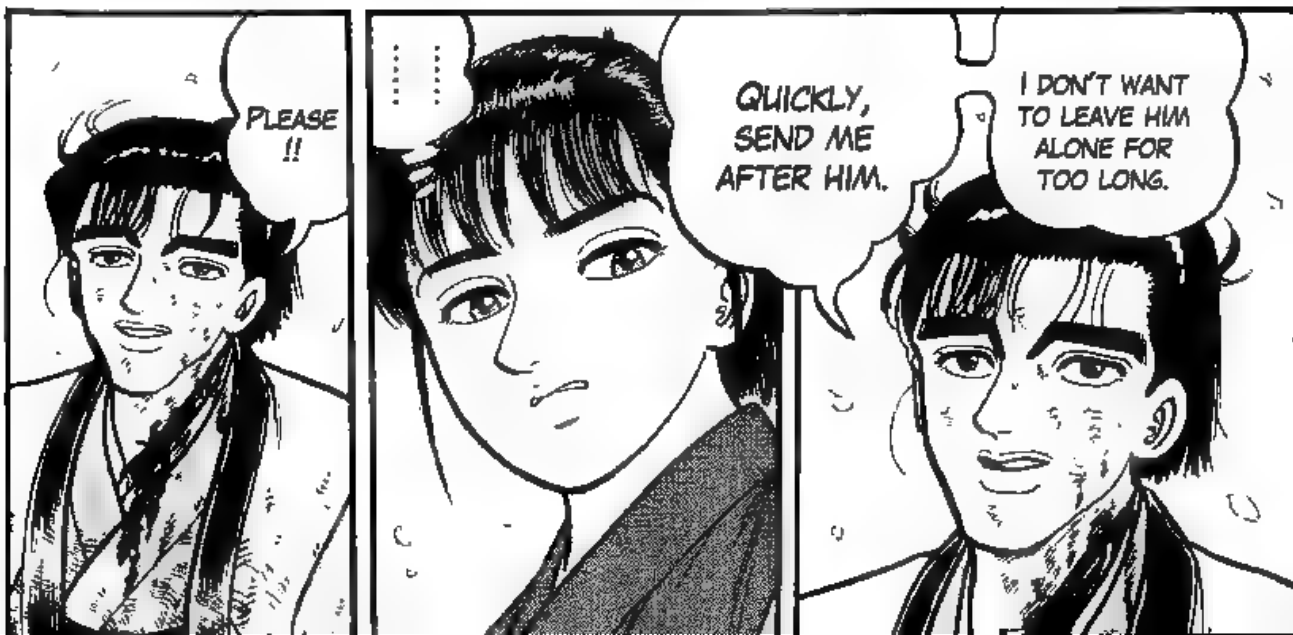

THIS FIGHT HAS BROUGHT ME SATISFACTION...
YOU'VE SHOWED ME AN OUTSTANDING SWORDPLAY.
DOES IT MEAN THAT, AFTER ALL, OUR SWORD WAS ONLY A SWORD TO BE USED INSIDE A DOJO ...?
.....
I SEE...

NGHH!
.....


RIN-
TARO
...
DOC


RINTARO, WITH WHOM I COMPETED WITH THE SWORD, HAS ALREADY BEGUN HIS TRIP TO THE AFTER WORLD.




PLEASE !!
.....
QUICKLY, SEND ME AFTER HIM.
I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE HIM ALONE FOR TOO LONG.

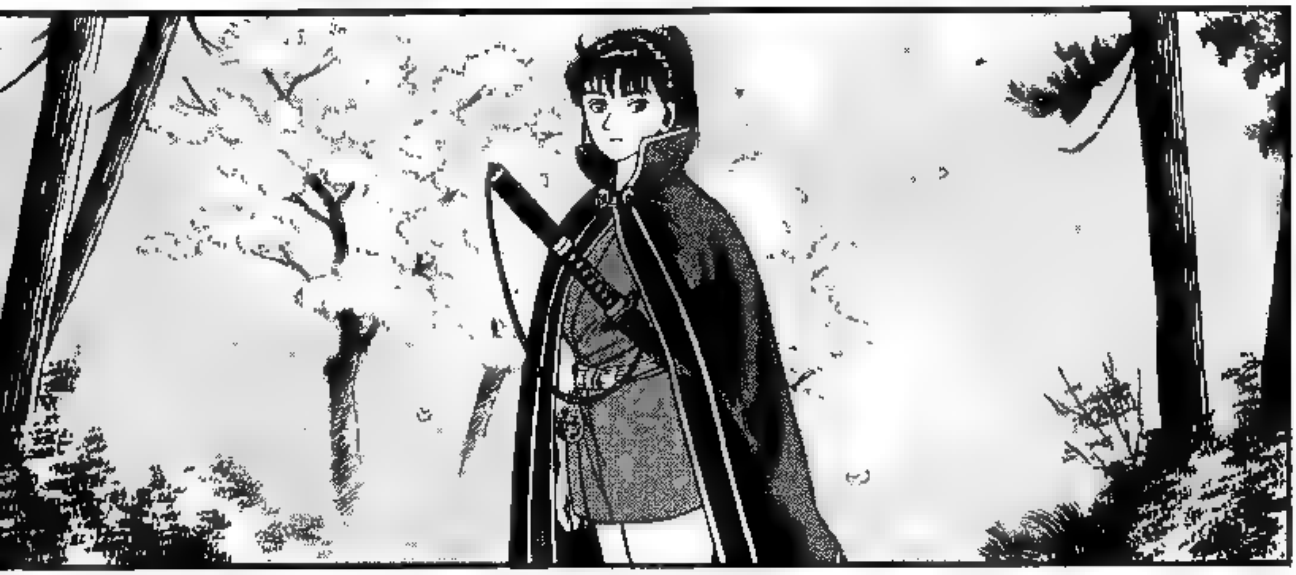
RIN-
TARO...
KYO
SUKE...
ビクッ

RIN-
TARO
...
KYO
SUKE...
NGHH!
GH!

UH!
KHH!
FGH!!!

FGH!!
KH!

AZUMI
!!

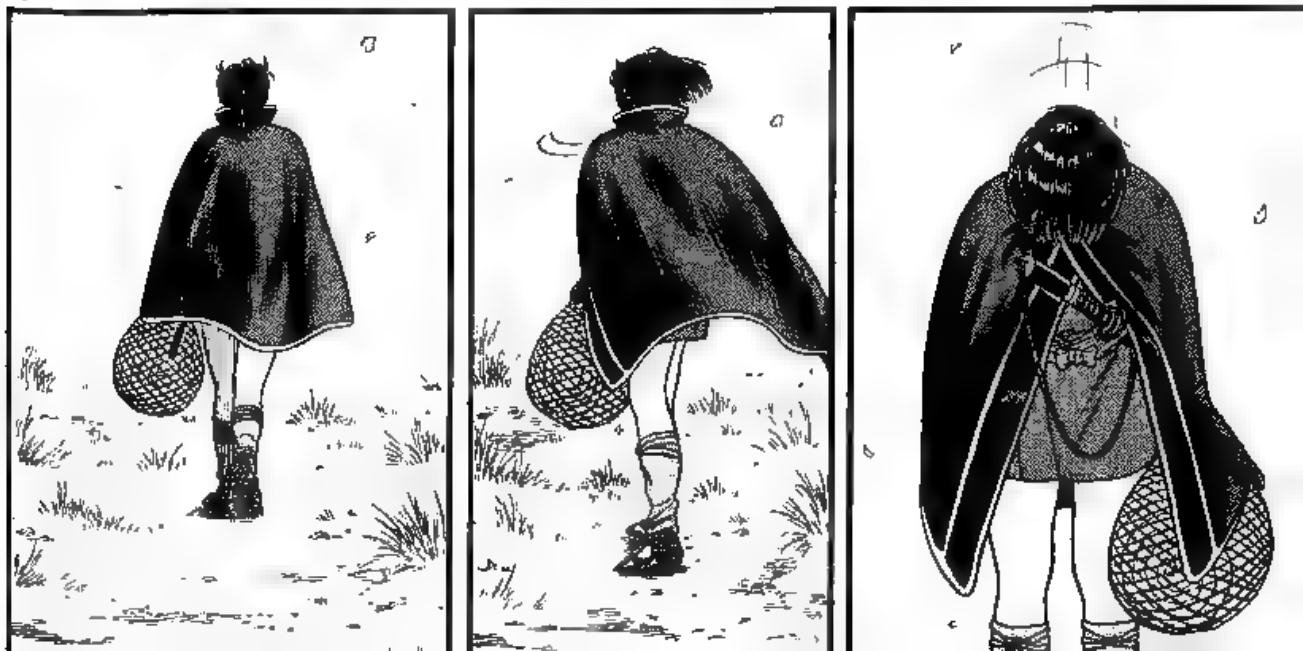


THE NAME OF YOUR GRAND-FATHER WHO TAUGHT YOU THE SWORD!!
TELL ME

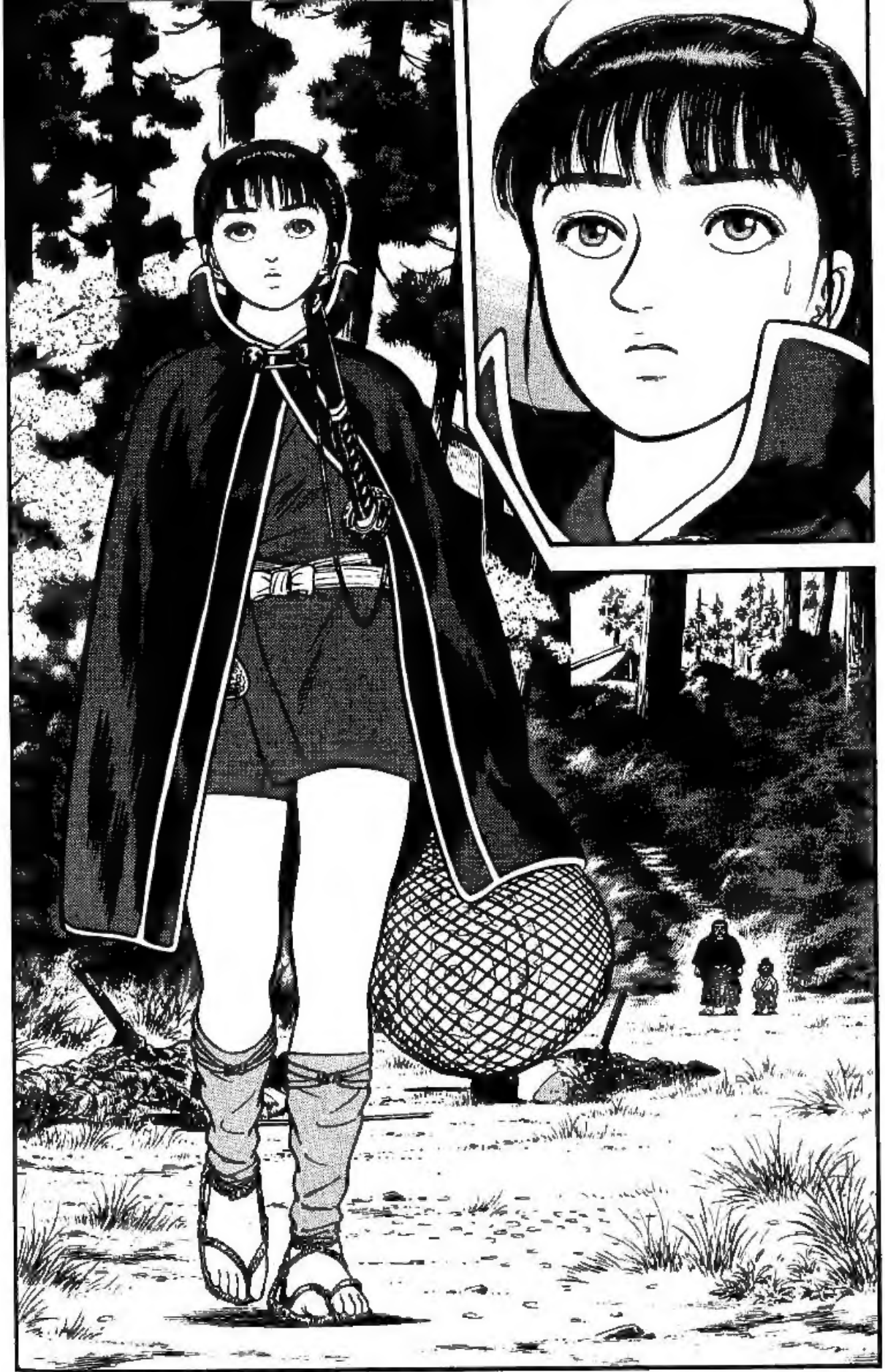
HE'S NAME WAS OBATA GESSAI!!

OBATA GESSAI ...
OBATA... GESSAI ...!?





UH!
UHG!!
IN THIS WORLD...THERE WAS STILL A TERRIFYING SWORDMASTER... WITHOUT A NAME...
I LOST... IT'S MY DEFEAT.
29
KH!
HIC!
KH!



Serialized in Big Comic Superior from issue #9 to #15, 1997. "AZUMI" VOLUME 9 – END -

# あずみ9 —家康の最期—

ビッグコミックス

ISBN4-09-183549-X

1998年1月1日初版第1刷発行 (検印廃止)
1998年10月5日 第5刷発行

著者 小山ゆう
©Yū Koyama 1998
発行者 熊谷玄典
印刷所 凸版印刷株式会社
Printed in Japan

発行所 (〒101-8001) 東京都千代田区一ツ橋二の三の一
振替(00180-1-200) TEL 編集03(3230)5509 販売03(3230)5749 株式会社 小学館

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AZUMI

ISBN4-09-183549-X

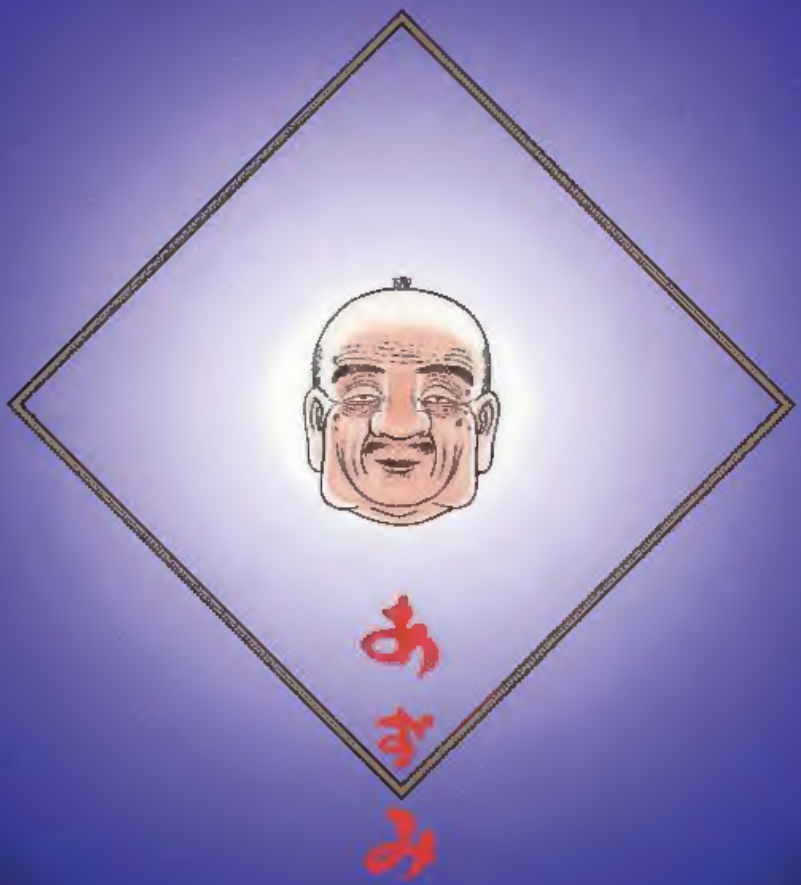
C9979 ¥486E

9784091835499

定価510円 本体486円

雑誌 45785－49 小学館

1929979004866




■9巻のあらすじ

爺が殺され、天涯孤独の身となったあずみは、素性を隠して剣客・小野忠明の道場に身を寄せていた。実は、この道場には、旧豊臣方の家臣で、秘かに家康暗殺の機会をうかがっていた井上勘兵衛も働いていた。偽名を使い、やけどで風貌も別人のようになっていた勘兵衛であったが、偶然、ここを訪れた徳川方の重臣・本多正純によって、その正体を見破られてしまうが…（第1話）。